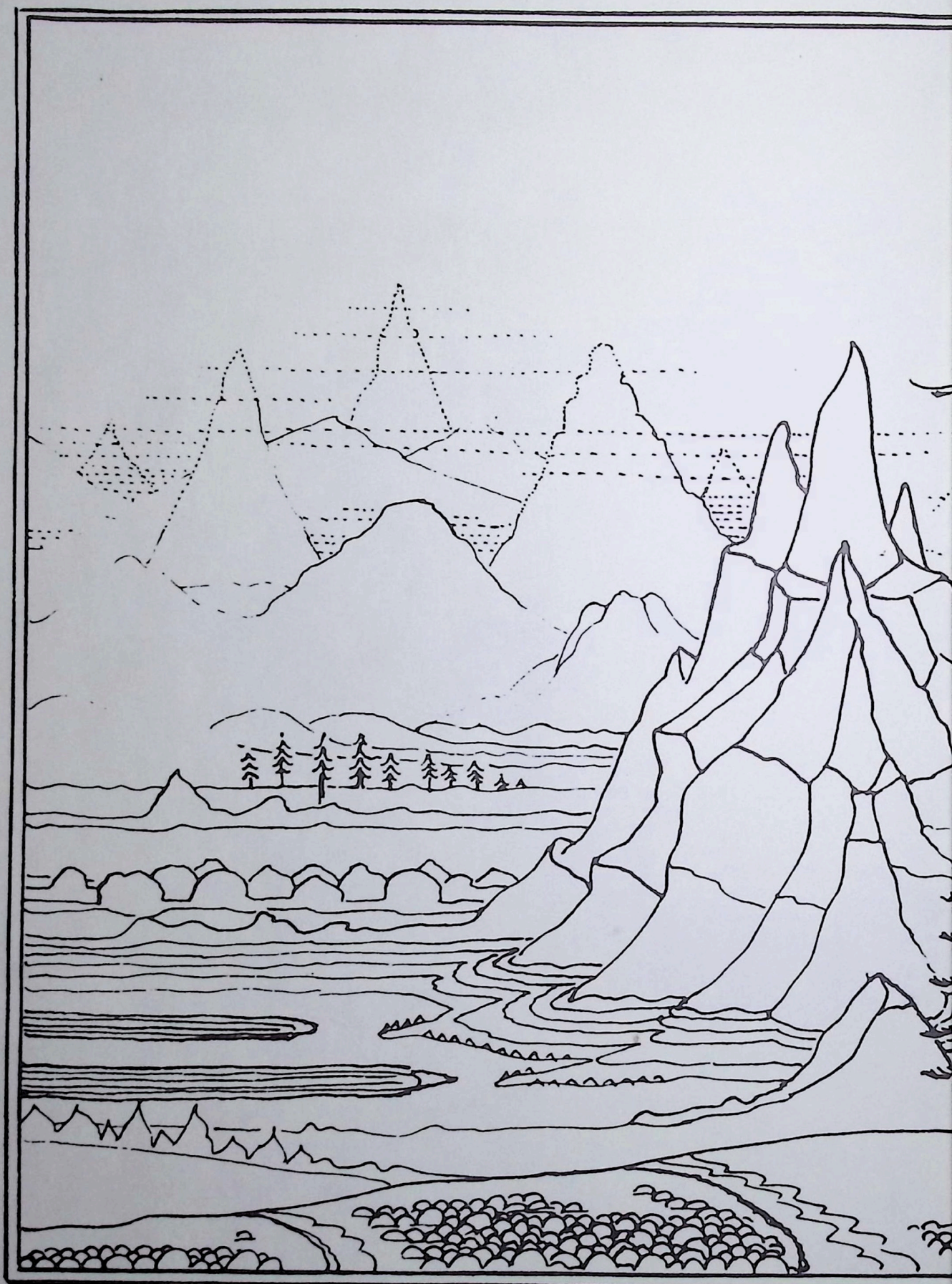


J.R.R. Tolkien

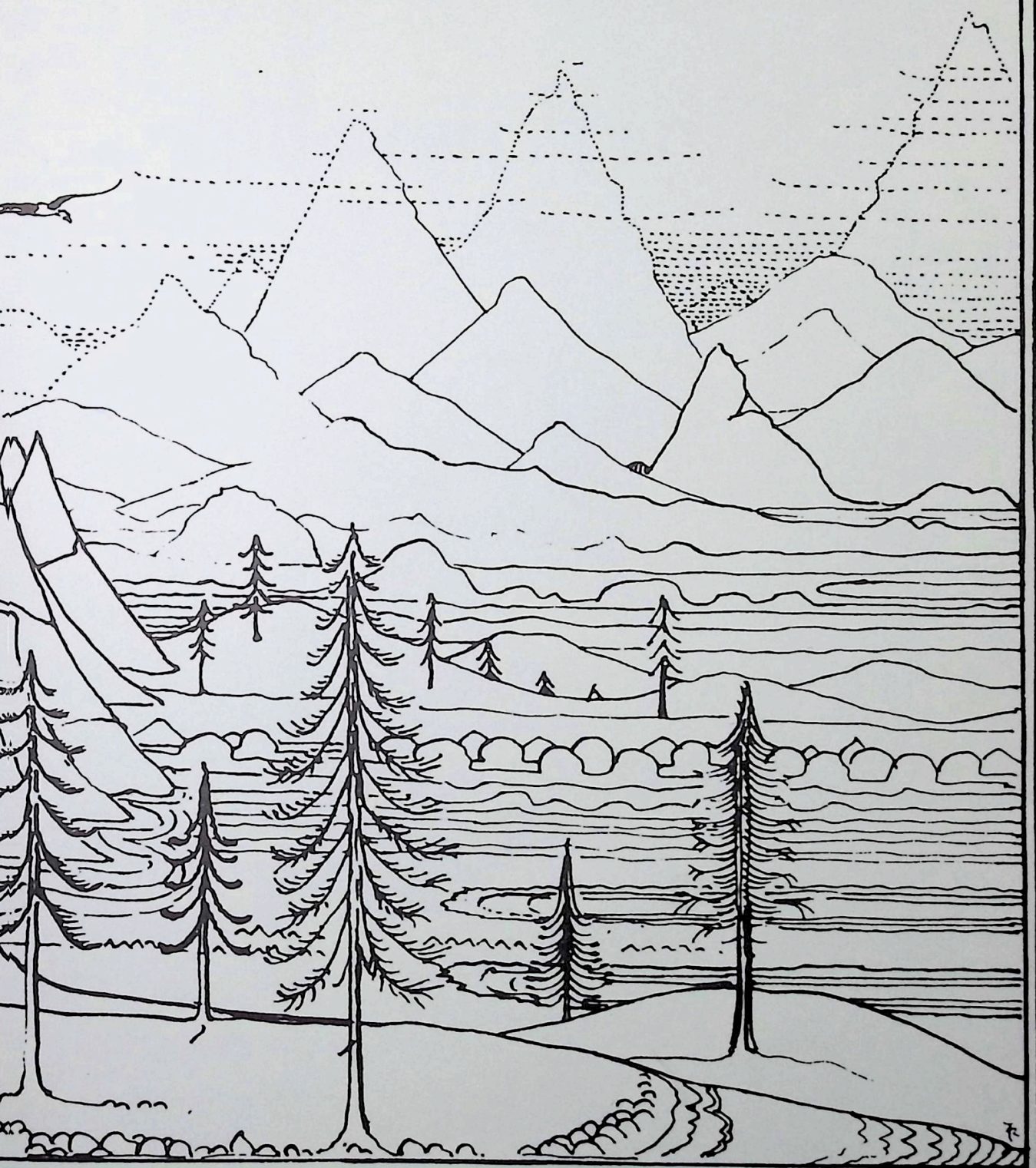
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LIFE AND LEGEND





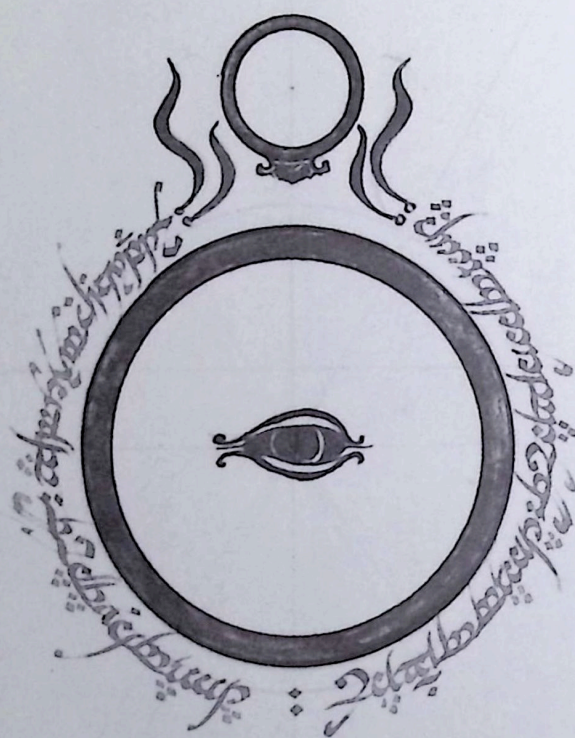
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Eyrie towards G



Looking West from the
Dublin Gate

THE LORD OF THE RINGS
I

The Fellowship
of the



Ring

by

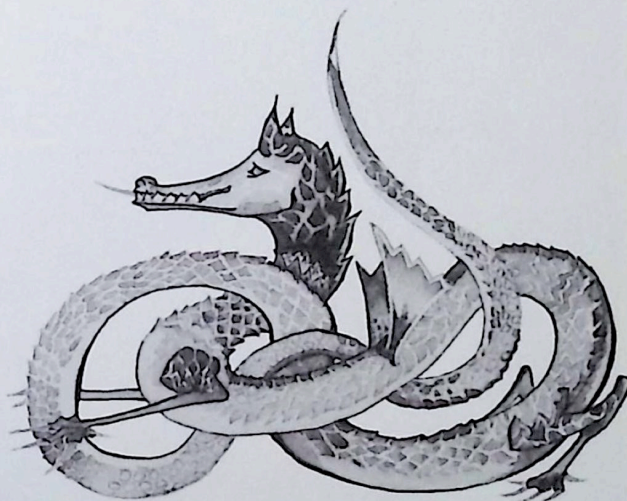
J.R.R. Tolkien

J.R.R. TOLKIEN

LIFE AND LEGEND



An Exhibition
to Commemorate the Centenary
of the Birth of
J.R.R. Tolkien
(1892–1973)

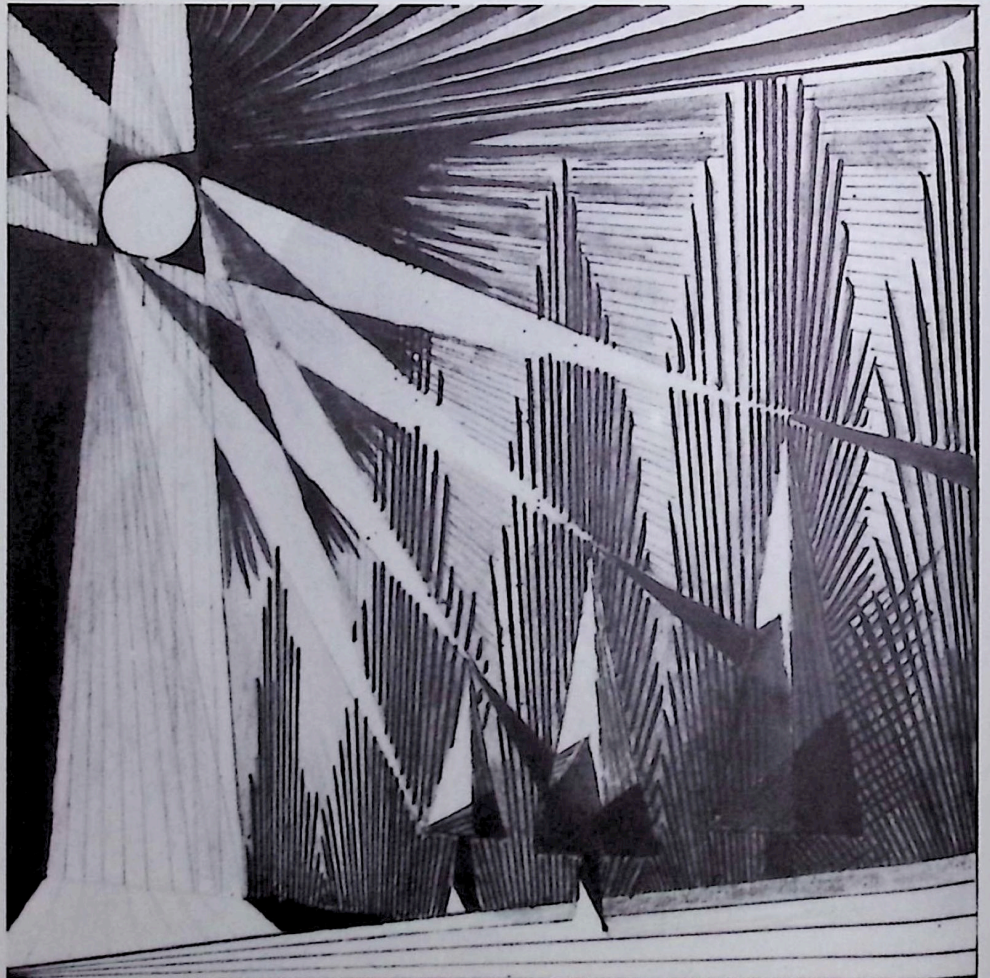


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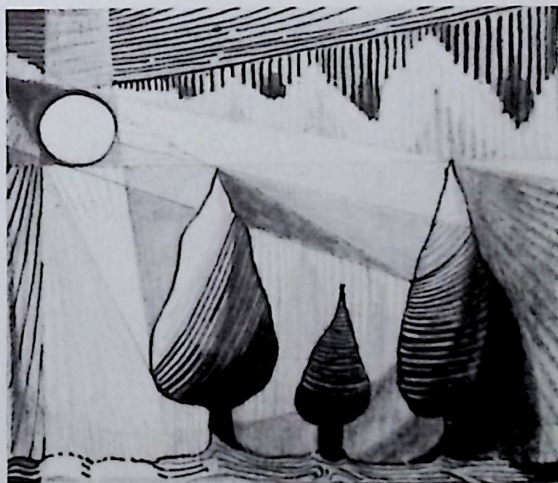
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MS. Tolkien drawings 88, fol.28

CONTENTS

Introduction	7
1 Family and Early Life (items 1–15)	8
2 Schooldays and Oxford (items 16–45)	15
3 War (items 46–61)	30
4 Lexicography and Leeds (items 62–86)	36
5 'Mr. Baggins' (items 87–146)	45
6 <i>The Lord of the Rings</i> (items 147–91)	57
7 <i>The Silmarillion</i> (items 192–223)	66
8 Academic Life (items 224–32)	75
9 Last Years (items 233–50)	82
Afterword	88
General index	90
Index of names and places	94
Index of shelfmarks	95



MS. Tolkien drawings 88, fol.27



20 INTRODUCTION

JUDITH PRIESTMAN

Department of
Western Manuscripts

In later life, after the success of *The Hobbit* and *The Lord of the Rings*, Tolkien was the recipient of many hundreds of fan-letters. A common request in these letters was that he should explain the sources of his inspiration. 'Only one's guardian Angel, or indeed God Himself, could unravel the real relationship between personal facts and an author's works', he wrote to one such enquirer in 1958 (*Letters*, p.288). Tolkien feared that an excessive concern with biographical detail would 'distract attention from an author's work and end . . . in becoming the main interest'. Yet he did not deny that personal facts were important and frequently supplied his correspondents with information about his life and motives for writing.

In this exhibition, held to celebrate the centenary of Tolkien's birth, I have tried to strike a balance between 'personal facts' and the 'author's work', allowing the works to speak for themselves in the context of the life. In particular, I have tried to indicate something of the scope and variety of Tolkien's achievements. To those who only know him as the author of *The Hobbit* and *The Lord of the Rings*, the range of his writing and art-work may come as something of a surprise.

With the exception of material relating to *The Hobbit*, many of the items on display have not been exhibited before. The exhibition would not have been possible without the kindness and generosity of the Tolkien Trust, who not only gave the Tolkien papers to the Bodleian Library but also financed the production of this catalogue and the conservation work on the exhibits. I owe a special debt to Christopher Tolkien, on whose exemplary editing of his father's manuscripts I have frequently drawn.

Particular thanks are also due to the following people: Dick Williamson, whose help and advice were invaluable, as ever; Simon Bailey, Mary Butler, Michael Freeman, Philip Lambie, Sally Lane, Andrew MacKinnon, Lorise Topliffe; members of the Bodleian's Conservation staff who prepared the exhibits for display: Lucy Blaxland, Dana Josephson and Edward Simpson, and to my colleagues in the Department of Western Manuscripts. I am especially grateful to Ruth Burchnall, Colin Harris, Rosemary McCarthy, Jacky Merralls, Tim Rogers, and to Gwydwr Leitch, who word-processed the text of this catalogue.

The scope of the exhibition was greatly extended by the loan of material from the Rector and Fellows of Exeter College, Katherine Duncan-Jones and Helen Bryant, and by the gift to the Library in 1991 of several hundred foreign editions of Tolkien's work from the publishers HarperCollins.

References have been kept to a minimum throughout. Four books are cited using abbreviated titles: *Biography*, *Letters*, *Pictures* and *HMe*. They are, in full: *J.R.R. Tolkien: a Biography* by Humphrey Carpenter (1977); *Letters of J.R.R. Tolkien* edited by Humphrey Carpenter with Christopher Tolkien (1981); *Pictures by J.R.R. Tolkien* with foreword and notes by Christopher Tolkien (1979), and *The History of Middle-earth*, volumes 1–9 of a projected series of twelve, edited by Christopher Tolkien (1983–). The sales-figures quoted in Sections 5–9 of the catalogue were taken from the *Guardian*, 28–9 Dec. 1991, and the *Observer*, 27 Dec. 1991.

Shelfmarks are given at the end of each main catalogue entry. Material with the prefix 'Family papers' is not currently available to readers.

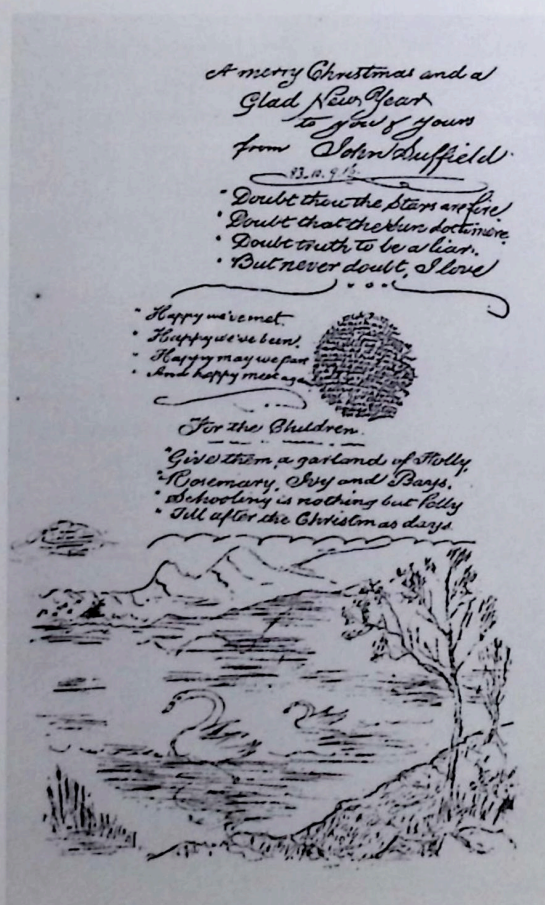
1 FAMILY AND EARLY LIFE

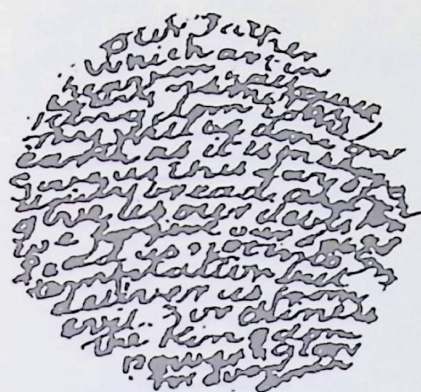
'My name is TOLKIEN (*not -kein*)', the author wrote to his American publishers in 1955 (*Letters*, p.218). 'It is a German name (from Saxony), an anglicization of ... *tollkühn*', which means 'foolhardy'. Although Tolkien's Aunt Grace (item 1) believed that the family was of noble origin (*Biography*, pp.18–19), there is in fact little evidence concerning them or their emigration to England until a bankruptcy report in the *Glasgow Chronicle* for 13 May 1813 named J.B. Tolkien, St. Paul's-church-yard, glass-seller, and G. Tolkien, St. John Street, dealer in watch tools. A tradition among the descendants of Henry Tolkien, younger brother of Tolkien's grandfather, John Benjamin (item 1), held that Henry and John were born in the Wilhelmstrasse in Berlin. But whatever the family's early history, they seem to have been established in England for about eighty or a hundred years by the time of Tolkien's birth in 1892.



1 John Benjamin Tolkien. Poems 'to my beloved wife Mary Jane', 28 June 1882. Tolkien's paternal grandfather was born in 1807 and moved to Birmingham in adult life to set up business as a piano manufacturer and music-seller. He had three daughters and five sons, including Tolkien's father, Arthur Reuel Tolkien, born in 1857. Mary Jane Stowe was his second wife. The notebook is opened to show the poem 'Answer to the saying "Life is not worth the living"' (1888) and a photograph of his daughter Grace, born in 1861. John Benjamin Tolkien was the author of many poems written for his domestic circle, including verses on the birth of Arthur and of J.R.R. Tolkien himself. He died in 1896, aged eighty-nine.

Family papers 1/33(3)





2 John Suffield. 'Though a Tolkien by name', Tolkien once wrote, 'I am a Suffield by tastes, talents and upbringing' (*Biography*, p.19). John Suffield was his maternal grandfather, born on 10 September 1833. The Suffields were a West Midlands family who had lived in Evesham for many generations, although John Suffield had been a prosperous draper in Birmingham until – like John Benjamin Tolkien and his two relatives – he was declared bankrupt and became a commercial traveller for Jeyes disinfectant. His ancestors had been engravers and plate-makers, and he was himself a keen amateur penman, producing fine-nibbed drawings and miniature writing, such as that exhibited here on a Christmas card he designed in 1916 in which the Lord's Prayer is written inside the circumference of a sixpence. He had three sons and three daughters, including Mabel, Tolkien's mother. He died in 1930 at the age of ninety-seven.

Family papers 1/33(10)

3 Mabel Suffield's drawing book. Mabel, or 'Mab', was John Suffield's fourth child. Born in 1870, she became engaged to Arthur Tolkien when she was eighteen and he was thirty-one. From her father she inherited a distinctive style of writing and drawing which she, in turn, passed on to her son. Her drawing-book (1882–4) is opened to show a fashionable watercolour of three Japanese girls, painted when Mabel was about fourteen. The back of the book contains some of Tolkien's earliest drawings, dating from 1905.

Family papers 1/33(4), fols.5^v–6



4

4 The Bank of Africa, Capetown, pictured in the *Cape Argus Weekly Edition*, 19 May 1892. Arthur Tolkien and Mabel Suffield became engaged in 1888 but were unable to marry for three years because of Arthur's poor salary as an employee of Lloyds Bank in Birmingham. In May 1889 he sailed for South Africa, having obtained a position with the Bank of Africa. He was appointed manager of the Bank's Bloemfontein branch at the end of 1890, a post which carried with it a house as well as an increased salary. Mabel sailed for the Cape in March 1891, not long after her twenty-first birthday. She and Arthur were married on 16 April, and after a week's honeymoon, made the seven-hundred mile journey to the capital of the Orange Free State where Tolkien was born and spent the first three years of his life.

Family papers 1/34(2)

5 Tolkien's birth. On 4 January 1892, the morning after Tolkien's birth, Arthur wrote to his mother to tell her the good news. In his excitement he misdated the letter 1891.

Mabel gave me a beautiful little son last night (3 January). It was rather before time, but the baby is strong & well and Mabel has come through wonderfully. The baby is (of course) lovely. It has beautiful hands and ears (very long fingers) and very light hair [a lock of which is shown beside the letter], 'Tolkien' eyes & very distinctly a 'Suffield' mouth. The boy's first name will be 'John' after its grandfather, probably John Ronald Reuel altogether. Mab wants to call it Ronald and I want to keep up John and Reuel . . . [Reuel was Arthur's second name].

Tolkien's Christian names became slightly problematic as he grew up. His family and close friends called him Ronald or Ron; his school friends called him John Ronald, and he himself experimented with various combinations of his name until he was in his mid-twenties (items 38 and 42).

Family papers 1/31

Sat. Night
March 4th 1893. -

The Bank House
Maitland Street
Bloemfontein.

My dear Mr & Mrs Tolkien

I expect you all think very badly of me that I never write to any of you, or even answer your kind letters to me? - I was very very pleased with the two lovely little pinafores, - so daintily made! & sent off (as we could see) by Mr Tolkien - The next door pet monkey had been over & eaten 3 of Ronald's pinafores & several other things into rags a few days before - Baby does look such a fairy when he's very much dressed-up in white frills & white shoes - I wish you could all see him - or even when he's very much undressed! I think he looks more of an elf still. - We are all hoping & praying for cooler days soon, when Florence's & Mabel's lovely little Xmas frocks will be just the thing

6 Letter from Mabel to Arthur's parents, 4 March 1893. In her distinctive handwriting, Mabel described the elfin appearance of her fifteen-month old son:

Baby does look such a fairy when he's *very* much dressed-up in white frills & white shoes . . . or even when he's very much *undressed* I think he looks more of an elf still . . . I dress him chiefly in little flimsy muslins with very short sleeves & low neck . . . the weather is still intensely hot & trying - one does get so tired of it by Feb. & March.

The climate of Bloemfontein suited neither Mabel nor the baby, and several letters of this period refer to his ill-health. There were also hazards from local wildlife. The letter shown here describes how a monkey ate three of Ronald's pinafores. Later in the year he was also bitten by a tarantula, and the theme of large venomous spiders recurs in both *The Hobbit* and *The Lord of the Rings*.

Family papers 1/33(7)

7 'Daddy Toekins from Wanild Toekins'. For Ronald's second Christmas, Mabel wrote a card on his behalf to Arthur: 'Kindly delivered by S. Claus Esq. at Bloemfontein O[range] F[ree] S[tate] - for Xmasse 1893'. Tolkien later delighted his own children with a series of letters from Father Christmas (items 75-86).

Family papers 1/33(7)

8 'Bloemfontein' trunk label. The climate of Bloemfontein proved so harmful to Ronald's and Mabel's health - she gave birth to Hilary Arthur Reuel on 17 February 1894 - that Arthur made arrangements for his wife and sons to take home-leave in England. He intended to remain in South Africa and join them later. At the beginning of April 1895 Mabel and the boys sailed on the *S.S. Guelph* for Southampton. A label from the trunk that they took with them was found preserved in Tolkien's papers after his death.

Family papers 1/33(8)

9 Tolkien's first letter. Mabel and the boys stayed with her father, John Suffield, in Birmingham for nearly a year whilst they waited for Arthur to join them. In November 1895, Arthur contracted rheumatic fever which he was unable to shake off, so Mabel made arrangements to return to South Africa. Ronald, aged five, dictated a letter to his nurse on 14 February 1896:

I am so glad I am coming back to see you it is such a long time since we came away from you I hope the ship will bring us all back to you Mamie and Baby and me . . . I am got such a big man now because I have got a man's coat and a mans [sic] bodice . . . your loving Ronald.

The letter was never sent because on the same day a telegram arrived to say that Arthur had haemorrhaged. He died a few hours later, on 15 February, and was buried in Bloemfontein.

Family papers 1/33(9)

9 Ashfield Rd
Kings Heath
Feb 14th 1896

My Dear Daddy
I am so glad
I am coming back
to see you it is
such a long time
since we came
away from you
I hope the ship

to
Dear Daddy
from Ronald
Feb 14th 1896

10 Tolkien's first sketch book. Mabel and the children moved to a small semi-detached cottage in the hamlet of Sarehole just outside Birmingham in the summer of 1896. It was the most formative period of Tolkien's life and it was here that Mabel began to teach him how to write and paint, and gave him his first language lessons. The drawings of plants and starfish exhibited here were made during an early seaside holiday.

MS. Tolkien drawings 84, fols.5^v-6

11-12 Roman Catholicism. Since Arthur's death, Mabel had been attending a High Anglican church. In the spring of 1900 she and her sister May Incledon began taking instruction in the Roman Catholic faith. It was a move that was to estrange Mabel from her family and cause her and her children much hardship when the Baptist Tolkiens and the Methodist/Unitarian Suffields withdrew their financial and emotional support. Exhibited here are (item 11) a book of prayers copied out by Mabel, and (item 12) a letter from May to Mabel:

Dear old Darling,

I did try to say my prayers, and it came to me absolutely certainly that I *must* obey my conscience come what may, and I feel *sure* we are right to do this . . . Oh Pet my heart feels like a huge cabbage – does yours? But my mind is clear as crystal & happy because it feels *sure*.

They were received into the Church of Rome in June 1900, although May's husband subsequently forbade her to attend church services.

Family papers 1/29(2); 2/4(9)



13



13 Father Francis Morgan, an undated photograph. When Tolkien began attending school (items 16–31), Mabel and the two boys moved back into Birmingham. At Birmingham Oratory she and her sons were befriended by the forty-three year old Father Francis Xavier Morgan, who showed them much kindness during a period of enormous financial strain when the family were living in conditions little better than a slum. Half Welsh and half Anglo-Spanish, he was able to encourage Tolkien's interest in these languages.

2569 d. 785, p.50 (photogr.)

14 Code-letter from Tolkien to Father Francis, 8 August 1904. The affection felt by Tolkien for Father Francis is shown in this ingenious pictorial code-letter in which the twelve-year old schoolboy invites 'M-eye deer owl-d France-hiss' to come and visit him. His preoccupation with languages, rhymes and pictures is already apparent, and the letter ends with a limerick:

There was an old priest naméd Francis
Who was so fond of "cheefongy" dances
That he sat up too late
And worried his pate
Arranging these Frenchified Prances

MS. Tolkien drawings 86, fol.1^v



15 'What is Home without a Mother (or a Wife)'. In the winter and early spring of 1904 Mabel and the children were all ill. The boys recovered but Mabel was diagnosed as having diabetes and taken to hospital. Hilary was sent to the Suffields and Ronald to Mabel's younger sister, Jane, in Hove. Whilst there, he sent his mother several drawings, one of which was the poignantly-titled: 'What is Home without a Mother (or a Wife)', depicting Edwin Neave (Jane's husband) and himself doing their own sewing. Father Francis arranged for the convalescent Mabel and the children to stay at Rednal, a hamlet in Worcestershire (from where Tolkien wrote the code-letter shown as item 14). It was here that Mabel's condition worsened and she died on 14 November 1904, aged thirty-four. Towards the end of his own life Tolkien wrote:

When I think of my mother's death . . . worn out with persecution, poverty, and, largely consequent, disease, in the effort to hand on to us small boys the Faith, and remember the tiny bedroom she shared with us in rented rooms in a postman's cottage at Rednal, where she died alone . . . I find it very hard and bitter, when my children stray away [from the Church]. (*Letters*, pp.353-4).

MS. Tolkien drawings 86, fol.5



Messrs. Sunnephens
SOPHIES
TRADE MARK

WHAT IS HOME WITHOUT A MOTHER
{OR A WIFE} EN

Shirley Jane

2 SCHOOLDAYS AND OXFORD

'It is to my mother who taught me (until I obtained a scholarship at the ancient Grammar School in Birmingham) that I owe my tastes for philology, especially of Germanic languages, and for romance', Tolkien wrote in 1955 (*Letters*, p.218). The love of language was central to his life and work, and it began under his mother's tutelage at Sarehole where he learned the rudiments of Latin, French and, later, German. At the age of seven, he took the entrance exam for his father's old school, King Edward's in Birmingham, but failed. However, when he resat the examination the following year he passed and began attending the school in the autumn term of 1900. Because King Edward's was in the centre of Birmingham and Mabel could not afford the four-mile train fare, the family were forced to leave Sarehole. 'Four years, but the longest-seeming and most formative part of my life', Tolkien recalled in old age (*Biography*, p.24).



16 King Edward's School, a photograph of 'Big School' in Barry's building. Founded in 1552 by Edward VI, King Edward's was a generously-funded school with high educational standards. The main school, which Tolkien attended from 1900 to 1911 (apart from a brief period in 1902), was housed in a Victorian Gothic building designed by Sir Charles Barry, the architect of the Houses of Parliament. It was demolished in 1936 when the school moved to new premises.

G.A. Warw. 8° 296, p.121 (photogr.)





17 Ronald and Hilary, photographed in 1905. When this photograph was taken, Mabel Tolkien had been dead for six months and the boys, aged thirteen and eleven, were living with their aunt Beatrice Suffield in Edgbaston. Mabel had appointed Father Francis Morgan to be their guardian and Birmingham Oratory became their second home, where they served early mass and breakfasted before going to school. Although Hilary did not share his brother's academic interests he also attended King Edward's School.

2569 d. 785, p.50 (photogr.)

18 *Roman History* by W.W. Capes (1879), a prize awarded to Tolkien for coming first in the Sixth Class under George Brewerton in 1905. The gold stamp displayed on the binding is one of the school seals. Tolkien was by this time showing scholarly promise at school and a precocious mastery of languages. As well as Greek, Latin, French and German, he had also become interested in Anglo-Saxon when Brewerton lent him an Anglo-Saxon primer. He subsequently read, and was enthused by, *Beowulf* and the Middle English poems *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight* and *Pearl*.

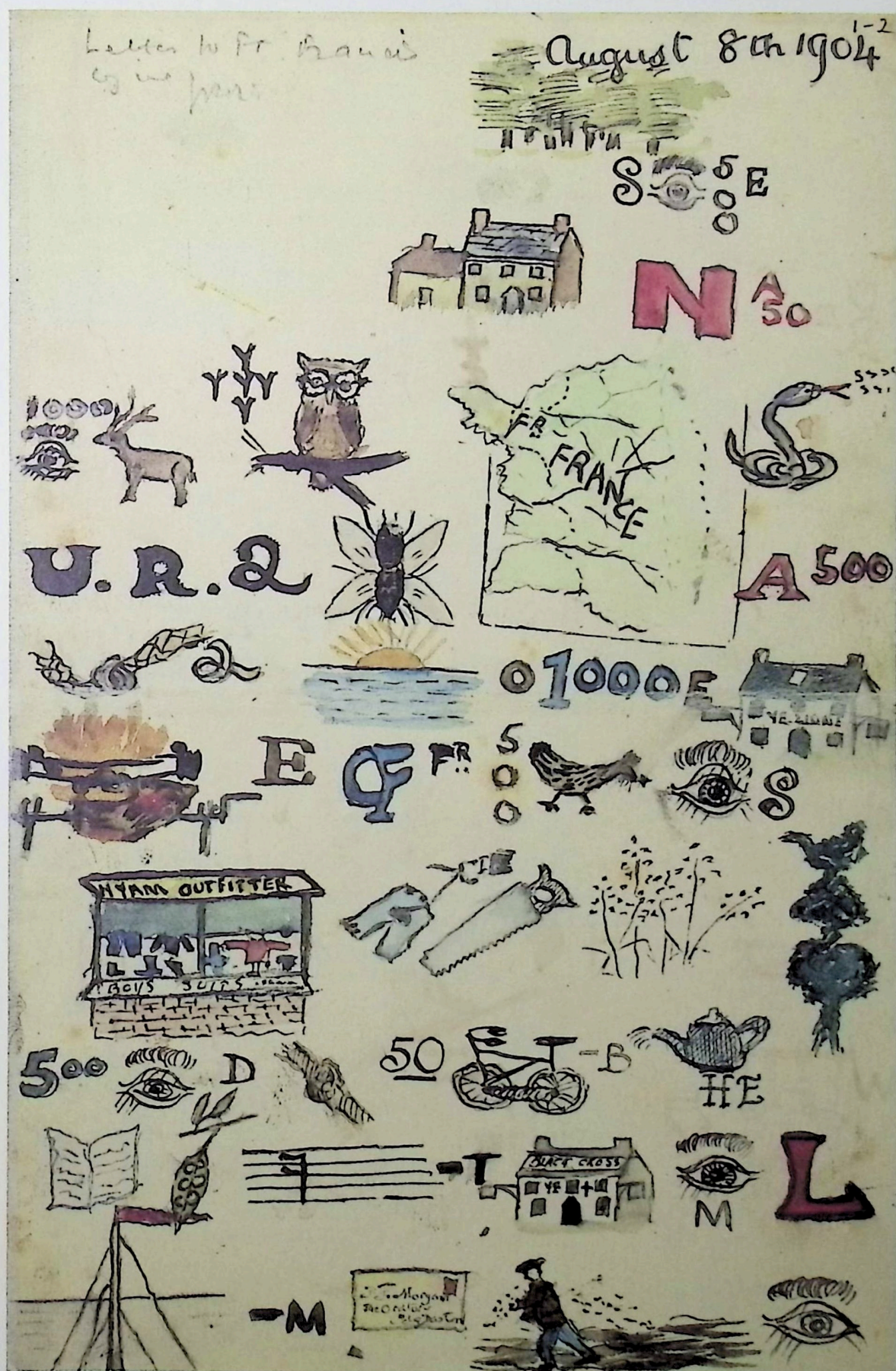
Tolkien E167

19 *Chambers's Etymological Dictionary*. This rather battered volume is open to show the note that Tolkien made on the pastedown in February 1973:

This book was the beginning of my interest in Germanic Philology (& Philol. in general) [about 1904]. Unfortunately the 'introduction' giving me my first glimpse of 'Lautverschiebung' [that is, consonant-shift] etc. became so well-worn & tattered that it has become lost.

Philo-logy, 'the love of language', was the basis of much of Tolkien's later work, not only as a professional academic but as author of *The Hobbit*, *The Lord of the Rings* and *The Silmarillion*. 'My work . . . is all of a piece, and fundamentally linguistic in inspiration', he wrote in 1955. 'The "stories" were made rather to provide a world for the languages than the reverse' (*Letters*, p.219).

Tolkien E168



20 'Book of the Foxrook'. Tolkien's interest in philology was greatly enhanced when a school-friend sold him a copy of Joseph Wright's *A Primer of the Gothic Language*, 1892 (item 35). He compared his experience of reading it with Keats's discovery of Chapman's *Homer*. 'I discovered in [Gothic]', he wrote to W.H. Auden, 'not only modern historical philology . . . but for the first time the study of a language out of mere love: I mean for the acute aesthetic pleasure derived from a language for its own sake' (*Letters*, p.213). He began to invent Gothic words and grammatical constructions, and from this developed an imaginary Germanic language. Much of his spare time as a schoolboy henceforth became taken up with the invention of private languages and alphabets. The 'Book of the Foxrook' is a notebook that Tolkien compiled in 1909, when he was seventeen. It contains a code-alphabet and commentary in a language based on Esperanto and Spanish. The influence of his reading in Father Francis' Spanish books is evident, although the title of the notebook may derive from Tolkien's earlier involvement with his cousins Marjorie and Mary Incledon's private language, 'Animalic' (*Biography*, pp.35-6).

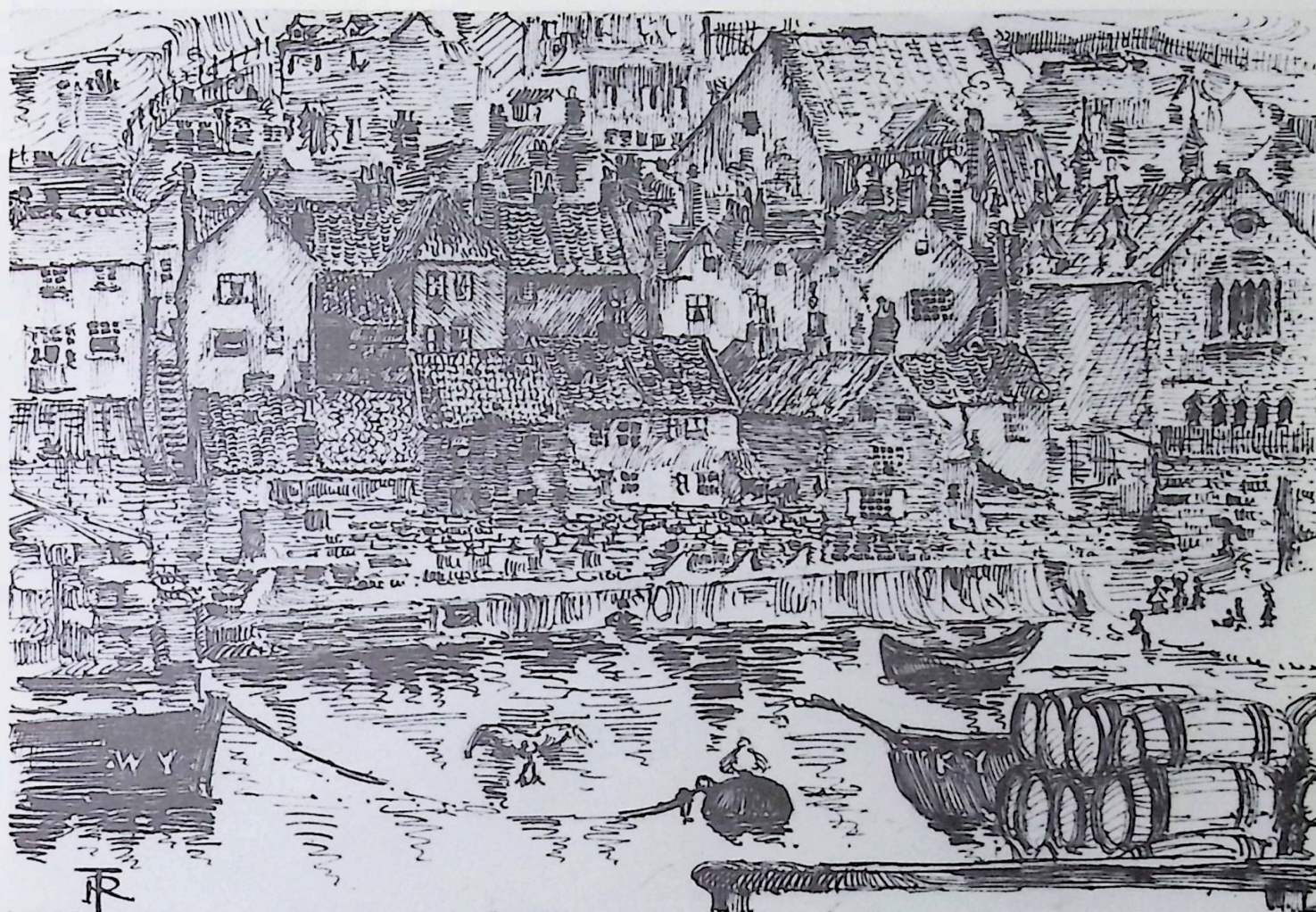
Family papers 1/29(3)

PRIVATA KODO SKAŬTĀ.

por-enscribo sur arboj
aŭ faro per versoj kaj
paŭzoj.

Kiam la vorto estas transskribita
(kaj tio ne ĉiam okazas)
la silabado estas fonetika
(esperanta okcepte nur e ĉ
i i ng ts).
e havas la sonon de 'th' en 'thin'
ĉ " " " " 'th' en 'thou'
i " " " " u in 'up'
' longigas la sonon de 'th' en 'thou'
na en kodo estas skribata
per unu signo
ts. kodo per du signoj.

code is written downwards from
top right-hand corner - monographs
for journal



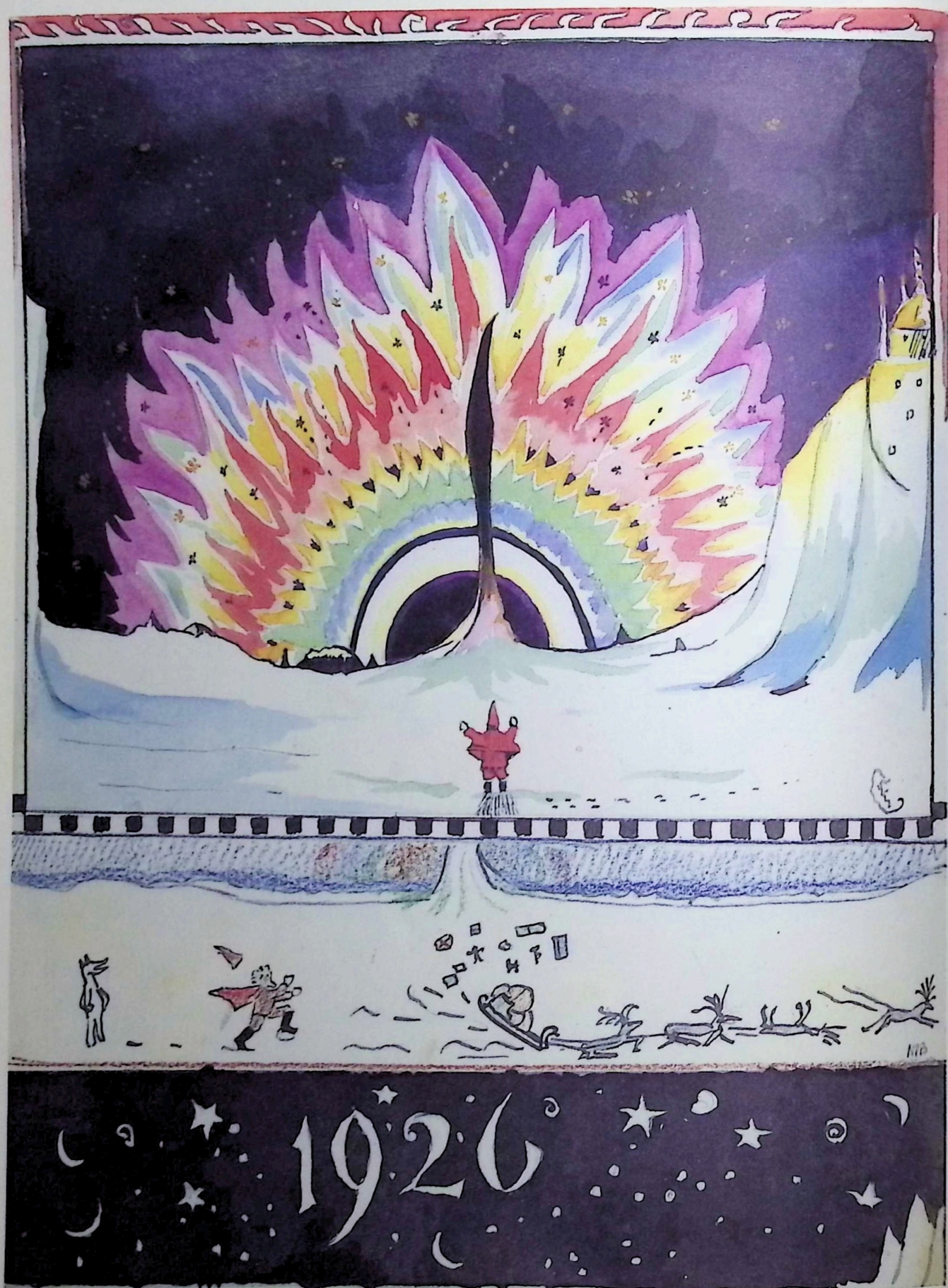
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21 Sketch of Whitby. By his late teens Tolkien had become a proficient artist in both pen-and-ink and watercolour. His preferred subjects were buildings and landscapes, both real and imaginary. The sketch of Whitby was made on a summer holiday in 1910 when he was eighteen. An early version of his famous ‘JRRT’ monogram can be seen in the bottom left-hand corner where the initials ‘RT’ are entwined.

MS. Tolkien drawings 86, fol.8

22 King Edward’s Debating and Literary Societies. Tolkien devoted a great deal of time in his last years at school to both the Literary and the Debating Society, of which he became Honorary Secretary. A joint Societies’ programme for the academic year 1910–11, exhibited here, shows that Tolkien was scheduled to speak to the Literary Society on ‘Norse Sagas’ on 3 February 1911. Another lecture, on ‘The Modern Languages of Europe – Derivations and Capabilities’, took three one-hour sessions to deliver and even so only got as far as ‘Derivations’ (*Biography*, p.48).

R.W. (‘Dickie’) Reynolds, who was Vice-President of the Debating Society and in whose room the Literary Society met, had been a critic on a London magazine before becoming a teacher. He was Tolkien’s form master in the Fourth Class and introduced him to post-Chaucerian literature. When Tolkien



began writing poetry in 1910 he showed it to Reynolds, and it was for Reynolds that he made the first outline of ‘The Silmarillion’ in 1926 (item 197).

Fellow-members of the Debating Society’s committee included Christopher Wiseman and the Headmaster’s son, Robert Quilter Gilson. Together with Geoffrey Bache Smith and Tolkien himself, the four boys formed themselves into an unofficial club that met for tea and discussion in the school library in term time and in Barrow’s Stores in the vacation. The Tea Club and Barrovian Society – the TCBS – played a crucial part in Tolkien’s literary and emotional development, and exercised as decisive an influence as the Oxford group, the Inklings, did in later life (item 224).

Family papers 2/7(1a)

23 Football fixtures. Although slightly built and bookish, Tolkien was a keen player of rugby football both at school and as an undergraduate (item 36). After an indifferent start to his school rugby career, he recalled that: ‘one day I decided to make up for weight by (legitimate) ferocity, and I ended up a house-captain at the end of that season, & got my colours the next’ (*Letters*, p.22). He also sustained a broken nose and a badly-bitten tongue, to which he later attributed his indistinct and hasty manner of speaking. A fixture card for 1910–11 names Tolkien as team Secretary.

Family papers 2/7(1f)



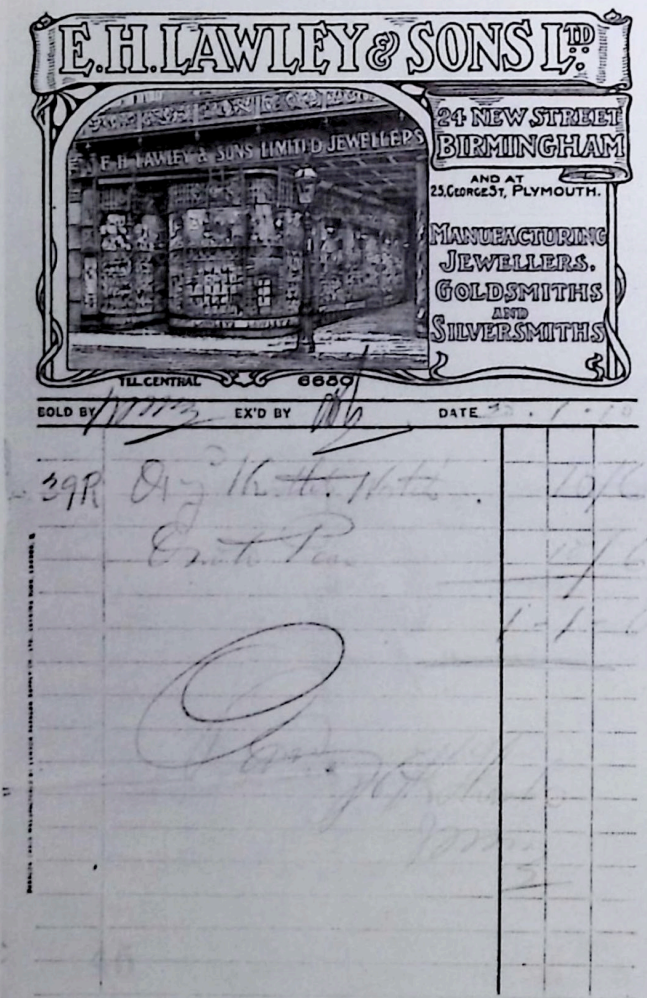
24 Edith Bratt, photographed in 1906. Ronald and Hilary lived with their aunt in Edgbaston for four years after Mabel’s death. They were not happy there and in 1908 Father Francis arranged for them to become lodgers in a house behind the Oratory at 37 Duchess Road. Their fellow-lodger was another orphan, a nineteen-year old girl called Edith Bratt. Born on 21 January 1889 in

Gloucestershire, she had been brought up by her mother Frances, and her cousin, Jennie Grove, a relative of Sir George Grove, the editor of the music dictionary. Although Edith had received a poor formal education, she displayed a talent for music and after her mother's death hoped to make a career as a piano teacher. The Tolkien brothers and she rapidly became friends and with Annie Collins, the maid, formed an alliance against their strict landlady, Mrs. Faulkener. In the spring of 1909 Ronald and Edith fell in love, but when Father Francis found out he made arrangements for Ronald and Hilary to leave Duchess Road. In the middle of the *furor*, Ronald went to Oxford to sit his entrance exams on 13–17 December. He failed, and was not allowed to return to Duchess Road afterwards.

2569 d. 785, p.51 (photogr.)

25 Birthday presents. After spending a few days in January 1910 at 11 Frederick Road, Ronald and Hilary moved to lodgings at 4 Highfield Road, from where Ronald continued to write to Edith and to meet her. Ronald was eighteen on 3 January, whilst Edith celebrated her 21st birthday on 21 January. A receipt dated 20 January 1910 shows the birthday presents that they bought for each other: a 10/6d wristwatch from Ronald and a 10/6d pen from Edith.

Family papers 1/30(4)



26–7 Two devotional pamphlets. Ronald and Edith had not been explicitly forbidden to meet after 1909, but when Mrs. Faulkener reported that they had been seen together the following February, Father Francis forbade them to meet or to correspond until Ronald was twenty-one. On 2 March 1910, Edith moved to Cheltenham to live with friends. Here she was able to resume her musical studies and learned to play the organ at the local Anglican church, where she also became involved in the choir and the Boys' Club. On 26 March, Tolkien obtained Father Francis' permission to write to her. In a long letter that ended with a poem, he also enclosed two devotional pamphlets: 'The Stations of the Cross' and 'The Seven Words on the Cross'.

Family papers 1/30(14–15)

28 Telegram from Edith. Tolkien resat his Oxford examinations in December 1910 and passed them, winning an Open Classical Exhibition worth £60 a year at Exeter College. He immediately contacted Edith, who telegraphed the following message on 17 December: 'Heartiest congratulations on success. Message received. Bratt'.

Family papers 1/3

29 Oxford results announced in *The Times*. Tolkien's Classical Exhibition was noted second in the entries for Exeter College, after the more prestigious Classical Scholarship. T.E. Lawrence's election to a senior demyship at Merton was also reported in the same column, Lawrence having gained a First Class degree in modern history the previous term.

Family papers 1/30(18)

30 Christmas card from Edith. This formally printed and unsigned Christmas card sent to Tolkien by Edith in 1910, is one of the last communications exchanged by them until Tolkien's twenty-first birthday in 1913. After 20 January 1911 he obeyed Father Francis's wish that he and Edith should not correspond, and instead threw himself into the life of the school, writing editorials and poems for the school magazine, as well as participating in its literary and sporting activities. When he left King Edward's in July 1911 he wrote: 'I felt like a young sparrow kicked out of a high nest' (*Biography*, p.49).

Family papers 1/3

31 *The Rivals*. Tolkien's connection with his old school continued after he became an undergraduate in October 1911. A fly-sheet and a programme for a performance of Sheridan's *The Rivals* at King Edward's on 21 December 1911 show that Tolkien played the part of the linguistically inventive Mrs. Malaprop. The previous term he had appeared as Hermes in a riotous version of Aristophanes' *The Peace* set to music-hall tunes, and amateur dramatics often featured in visits to his Incedon cousins. In adult life he became famous for his dramatic verse-speaking (items 228–9) and it was perhaps a taste that he inherited from his parents, both of whom participated in amateur dramatics in their youth.

Family papers 2/7

32 Tolkien photographed in 1911, aged nineteen. In 1964 Tolkien recalled how Dickie Reynolds had driven him to Oxford in 1911 to begin his undergraduate career: 'I was brought up to Oxford by car (then a novelty) . . . by

Dickie: in the October of that astonishing hot year 1911, and we found every one in flannels boating on the river. Punts were then as strange to me as camels; but I later learned to manage them' (*Letters*, p.343). Tolkien had spent part of the summer on a walking holiday in Switzerland with Aunt Jane Neave. It was here that he gained first-hand experience of the avalanche that he subsequently described in *The Lord of the Rings* and also bought a picture-postcard of a cloaked and bearded old man that he later annotated 'Origin of Gandalf' (*Biography*, p.51).

2569 d. 785, p.51 (photogr.)



33

33 Exeter College, photographed before the First World War. The majority of Oxford undergraduates at this time were wealthy former public schoolboys, and as a poor, Roman Catholic student Tolkien was potentially the butt of much snobbery. Fortunately for him, however, Exeter College had a tradition of social equality and friendliness so that he quickly settled into his rooms overlooking Turl Street. Despite separation from Edith, Tolkien's undergraduate years were a source of great pleasure to him, although he regularly overspent his meagre income and the allowance that Father Francis gave him. A contemporary photograph of Exeter shows the view down Turl Street and the old residential wing of Exeter in which Tolkien had rooms. This building was later demolished to make way for Barclay's Bank and Blackwell's Art Shop, with new student accommodation above.

Photograph supplied by Exeter College

34 *A Finnish Grammar* by C.N.E. Eliot (1890). In his last year at King Edward's School, Tolkien had discovered an English translation of the mythology of Finland, the *Kalevala* or 'Land of Heroes', which he determined to read in the original. Six weeks after he matriculated at Oxford he signed Eliot's *A Finnish Grammar* out of Exeter Library, on 25 November 1911. 'It was like discovering a complete wine-cellar filled with bottles of an amazing wine of a kind and flavour never tasted before', he told W.H. Auden. 'It quite intoxicated me; and I gave up the attempt to invent an "unrecorded" Germanic language, and my "own language" . . . became heavily Finnicized in phonetic pattern and structure' (*Letters*, p.214). This language was the High-elven 'Quenya', 'the original germ of the Silmarillion', as Tolkien wrote in 1944 (*Letters*, p.87). It was also nearly the cause of him failing the first part of his examinations, since he devoted more time to it than to his Classical studies. 'I came very near having my exhibition taken off me if not being sent down', he recalled in later life (*Letters*, pp.214-5).

Lent by Exeter College

35 Joseph Wright, *A Primer of the Gothic Language* (1892). Wright's *Primer* had encouraged Tolkien to invent his first imaginary language whilst he was a schoolboy (item 20). Although now reading Classics, Tolkien chose Comparative Philology as his special subject and was taught by the remarkable Professor Joseph Wright. Wright was entirely a self-made man who had begun his working life in a mill at the age of six. He taught himself to read and write at the age of fifteen, and at twenty-one took a boat to Antwerp and walked from there to Heidelberg, where he studied Sanskrit, Gothic, Old Norse, Old Saxon, Old and Middle High German, and Old English (*Biography*, pp.55-6). Now established in Oxford, he was a demanding teacher who encouraged Tolkien's interest in

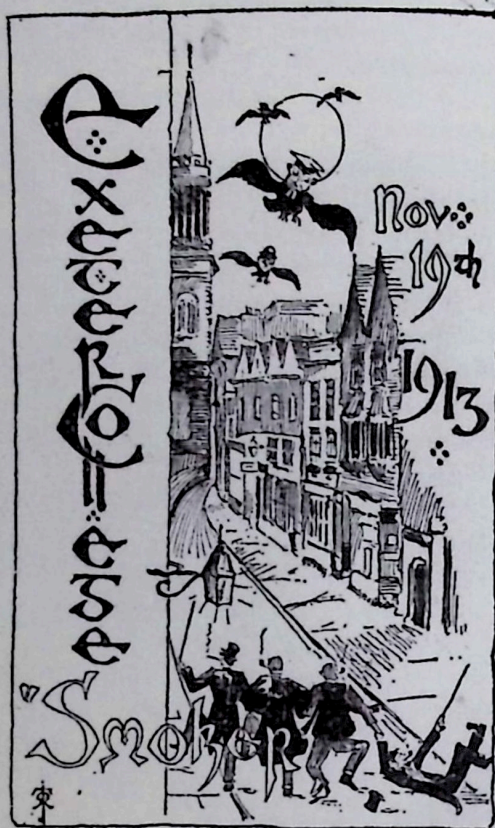
philology and, notably, medieval Welsh, which later influenced the construction of the Grey-elven language, 'Sindarin' (*Letters*, p.176). Although Tolkien did not do particularly well in the Classics part of his Honour Moderations, he obtained a pure alpha in Comparative Philology. In the summer of 1913 he decided to give up Classics and began reading English instead.

30321 f. 1, title-page

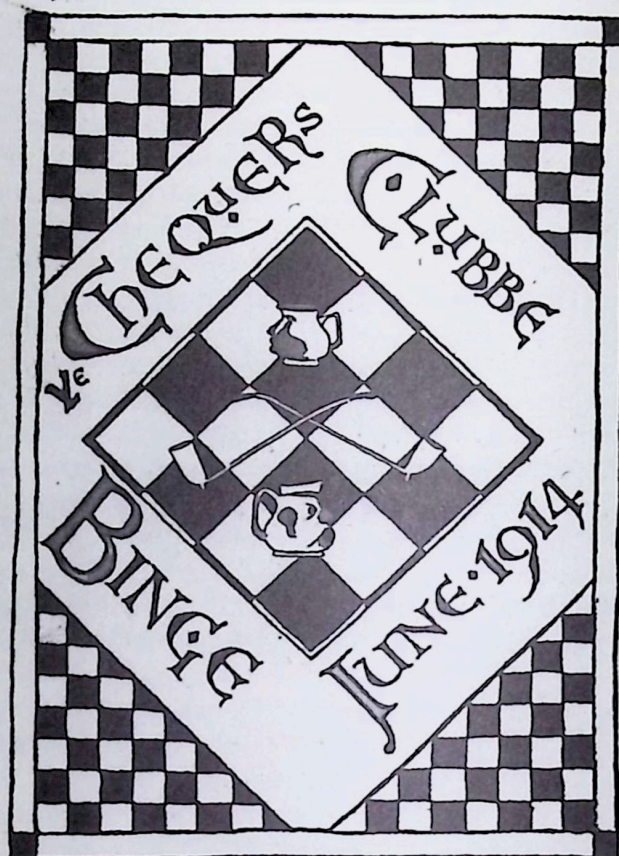
36–40 Clubs and Societies. As an undergraduate Tolkien participated enthusiastically in his college's extra-curricular activities, just as he had as a schoolboy at King Edward's. A joint photograph of Exeter Rugby XV and Boat Club taken in 1914 shows Tolkien's small frame dwarfed by his burly companions in the middle of the second row from the back (36). He joined Exeter's debating society, the Stapledon; the Dialectical Society, and the Essay Club, of which he became President in 1914 (37). It was to the Essay Club that he read the first story in the 'Silmarillion'-mythology in 1920 (item 193). He also founded his own discussion and dining club, 'The Apolausticks' ('those devoted to self-indulgence'). Tolkien proposed the toast, 'The Club', for an Apolausticks dinner on 1 June 1912. The menu-card was subsequently signed by some of the diners, including Tolkien, whose signature reads: 'John R.P. Reuel-Tolkien' (38). He later displayed his talents as a draughtsman on two cards that he designed for his fellow-students, one for the then popular form of entertainment known as a 'Smoker', 19 November 1913, and one for a Chequers Club dinner which he attended on 18 June 1914 (39–40). Both drawings feature in the bottom left-hand corner a version of his monogram involving the four familiar initials, JRRT.

Family papers 1/7(2); photograph supplied by Exeter College





39

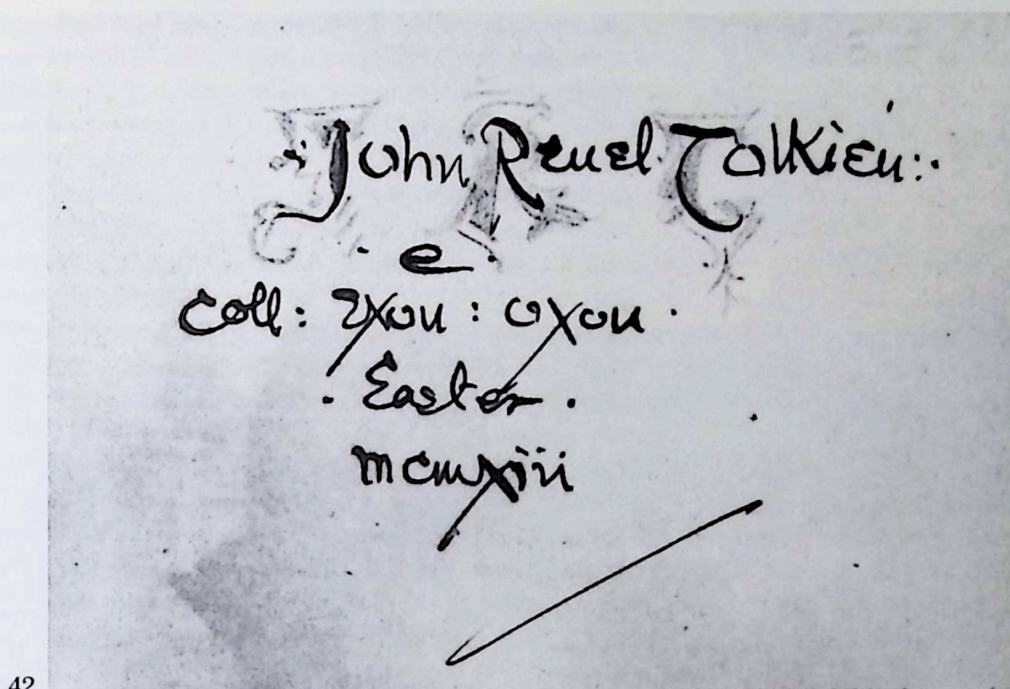


40

41 Sketchbook. Tolkien continued to develop his skills as an artist whilst he was an undergraduate. One of his sketchbooks dating from this time contains drawings that he made during a walking holiday in Berkshire in August 1912. He had taken the holiday after a two-week exercise in Kent with King Edward's Horse, a Territorial cavalry regiment of which he was a member until 1913. The sketchbook is open to display two pen-and-ink drawings of cottages in the village of Eastbury, made on 28 August 1912. The 'JRRT' monogram figures in both.

MS. Tolkien drawings 85, fols.6^v-7

42 Inscription. Tolkien's interest in calligraphy had been fostered by his mother and at Oxford he began to learn the many styles of handwriting employed by scribes in early manuscripts, as well as evolving several for his own use. A decorated inscription appears at the front of one of the books that he owned as an undergraduate when he began to study English: the *Pearl*, edited by Charles Osgood (1910). His membership of Exeter College, the date (Easter 1913) and the location of the book in Tolkien's literature and philology library are given in Latin. The form of his name, with the capitals embellished in



coloured crayon, is 'John Reuel Tolkien'. In other books that he owned at the same period he inscribed himself variously: Ronald Tolkien, John Ronald Tolkien, J.R. Reuel Tolkien and J.R.R. Tolkien. A translation of *Pearl* was to occupy him from the 1920s until the end of his life, although it was not published until two years after his death, in 1975.

Tolkien E16/26, fly-leaf

43 Work-diary. Two months before taking his first examination in Classics, Tolkien celebrated his birthday, on 3 January 1913. He had promised Father Francis not to contact Edith until he was twenty-one and just after midnight on his birthday he sat in his rooms at Exeter and wrote to her for the first time in two years. They became unofficially engaged a few days later (*Biography*, pp.61–71). One of Tolkien's promises to Edith was that he would work harder and to that end he began to keep a work-diary. Under the heading 'JRRT and EMB in account together, AMDG' ('ad maiorem Dei gloriam', to the greater glory of God), Tolkien kept a record of the number of hours that he worked, together with notes (in red ink) of the performance of religious duties and saints' days.

Family papers 1/28(2), fols.4^v–5

44 Final examination time-table for the Honour School of English Literature. A year after war had been declared, Tolkien took his final examinations in June 1915. This time, instead of the disappointing Second he had obtained in his Classics Moderations, he was awarded a First Class Degree. The following month he was in the army preparing to fight in France.

Family papers 1/7(3e)

45 'Goblin Feet'. Tolkien continued to write poetry as an undergraduate, encouraged by fellow-members of the TCBS whom he met regularly during vacations. One such meeting in London in the Christmas Vacation of 1914 became known as 'The Council of London', and it was from this time that Tolkien dated the start of his serious writing. He had already written two poems that he later described as the 'germ of my attempt to write legends of my own' (*Letters*, p.345) – 'The Voyage of Earendel the Evening Star' and a William Morris pastiche, 'The Story of Kullervo'. Throughout 1915 he began to compose poems related to this mythology, although when he appeared in print it was ironically enough with the sort of verses that he was soon thoroughly to despise. 'Goblin Feet', with its 'fairy lanterns' and 'tiny horns / Of enchanted leprechauns / And the padding of feet of many gnomes a-coming!' embodies everything that Tolkien came to detest about 'fairy' poetry. It appeared in *Oxford Poetry, 1915*, edited by G.D.H. Cole and T.W. Earp ('the original twerp', *Letters*, p.95). Other contributors included Naomi Haldane (Mitchison), Aldous Huxley, Dorothy Sayers and fellow-TCBSite, G.B. Smith. Despite Tolkien's own opinion of the poem, it proved popular and was subsequently reprinted on several occasions.

Per. 2805 e. 639, pp.64-5





131

'House where "Rover" began his adventures', 1927

3 WAR



The First World War began on 4 August 1914, when Tolkien was still an undergraduate. Within a year of joining up he was in the Battle of the Somme and a few months after that was invalided back to England, where he spent the rest of the war. In later life, like his friend and colleague C.S. Lewis, he denied that he had been especially influenced by his experiences of war, although on one occasion he wrote that the Dead Marshes and the desolation of the Morannon in *The Lord of the Rings* 'owe something to Northern France after the Battle of the Somme' (*Letters*, p.303). But although Tolkien did not respond directly to the war in the manner of Robert Graves or Siegfried Sassoon and the War poets, for example, it was a personally decisive time for him as for many of his generation.



46-7 Edith and Ronald, photographed in 1916. Tolkien was posted to the 13th Battalion of the Lancashire Fusiliers at Bedford on 9 July 1915. Edith, meanwhile, had been forced to leave her friends in Cheltenham because of her engagement to Tolkien and had taken rooms with her cousin Jennie Grove, first in Warwick and later in Great Haywood near Rugeley, Staffordshire, where Tolkien was stationed in August 1915. As it became increasingly likely that he would be sent to France, early in 1916 they decided to marry. The photograph of Tolkien shown as item 46 was taken before his embarkation. He is wearing the uniform of a 2nd Lieutenant, the rank in which he served until November 1917, when he was made a full Lieutenant.

2569 d. 785, p.114 (photogr.)

48 Wedding telegram. Tolkien and Edith finally married on 22 March 1916. Father Francis wished them 'every blessing and happiness' (*Biography*, p.78) and offered to conduct the service himself, although Tolkien had arranged for the ceremony to take place at the church in Warwick where Edith had been received into the Catholic faith on 8 January 1914. On an envelope containing a congratulatory telegram they both doodled versions of Edith's new name: 'Edith Mary Tolkien, Mrs. Tolkien, Edith Tolkien, E.T., Mrs. J.R.R. Tolkien'.

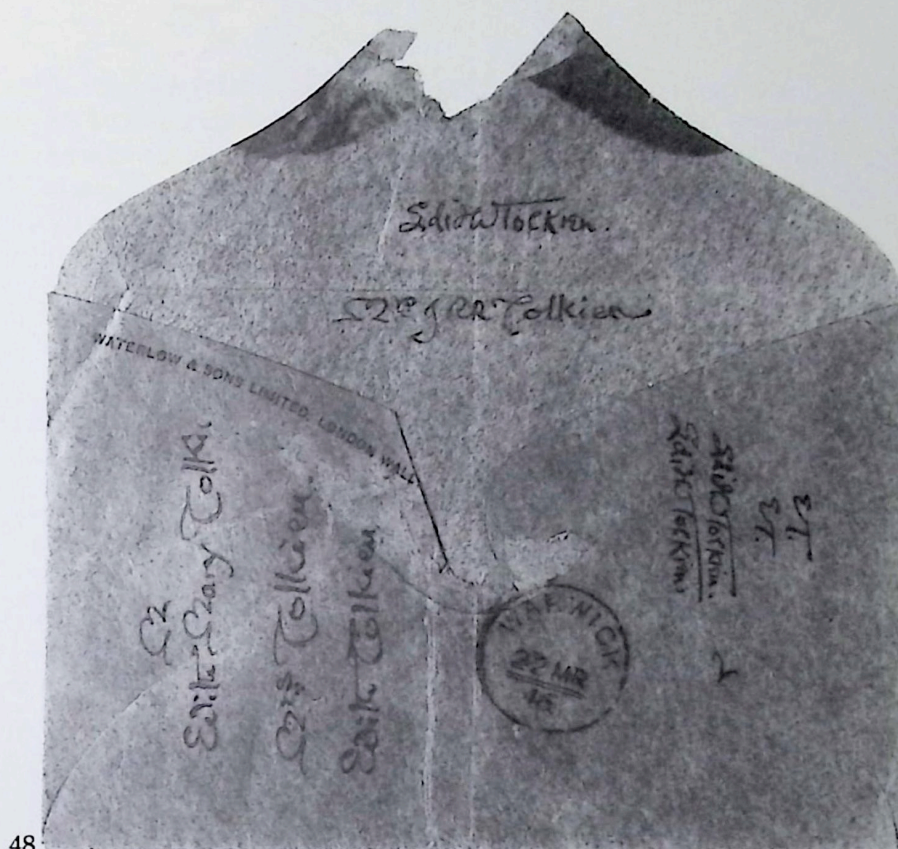
Family papers 2/4(7)

49-50 Signalling manual and certificate. With his expertise in languages and codes, Tolkien decided to specialize in signalling during the long training months 'wasted in wearily going over, over and over again, the dreary topics, the dull backwaters of the art of killing' (*Biography*, p.78). He was, however, able to supplement his reading of textbooks like (item 49) *Signalling: Morse, Semaphore, Station Work, Despatch Riding, Telephone Cables, Map Reading*, 3rd edition, 5th reprint (1915) with books on Icelandic and with his own writing, although the publishers Sidgwick & Jackson turned down a projected volume of poems, 'The Trumpets of Fairie', on 31 March 1916. (MS. Sidgwick and Jackson 36, fol.465). On 13 May 1916 he was issued with his 'Provisional Instructor's Certificate of Signalling' (item 50).

24793 f. 38; Family papers 2/6(s)

51 Embarkation order. On 2 June 1916 Tolkien received his orders to leave for France. He took a train to London on 4 June and crossed the Channel two days later, where he was transferred to the 11th Battalion of the Lancashire Fusiliers as Signalling Officer. G.B. Smith and R.Q. Gilson were already at the Front as preparations began for the Battle of the Somme.

Family papers 2/6(n)



48

52 Trench map, 1916. The disastrous Battle of the Somme, in which 20,000 Allied troops were killed on the first day, began on 1 July 1916. One of the reasons for the high casualty rate was the misleading information supplied to the troops about the strength of the German barbed wire and the state of their defences. Among Tolkien's papers relating to the war is a trench map dating from later in the campaign. Its salient points – ‘wire very thin. Gaps in wire every 30 or 40 yards’ – were obtained from prisoners captured by the Allies, with a consequently dubious level of accuracy.

Family papers 2/6(f)

53 Letter from G.B. Smith, 3 February 1916. All the members of the TCBS had joined up on, or soon after, the outbreak of war. Smith and Gilson were in the army; Wiseman in the navy. They continued to write to each other, however, relating their experiences and making plans for the future. The four intended to make their mark as writers and thinkers, and Smith had, like Tolkien, been writing poems. In this letter he encouraged Tolkien to try to get his work published:

I am a wild and whole-hearted admirer, and my chief consolation is, that if I am scuppered to-night . . . there will still be left a member of the great TCBS to voice what I dreamed and what we all agreed upon. For the death of one of its members cannot, I am determined, dissolve the TCBS. Death is so close to us now that I feel – and I am sure you feel, and all the three other heroes feel, how impuissant it is. Death can make us loathsome and helpless as individuals, but it cannot put an end to the immortal four! . . . Yes, publish . . . You I am sure are chosen, like Saul among the Children of Israel. Make haste, before you come out to this orgy of death and cruelty . . . May God bless you, my dear John Ronald, and may you say the things I have tried to say long after I am not there to say them, if such be my lot.

Family papers 2/2(1)

But anyhow, it is alive,
because it's matter is so
close to us all the time.)
May God bless you, my
dear John Ronald, and
may you say the things I
have tried to say long after
I am not there to say
them, if such be my lot.
Yours ever,
G.B.S.

53

54 Letter from R.Q. Gilson, 22 June 1916. Rob Gilson was with the 11th Suffolks and had already been involved in heavy action by the time Tolkien reached France. This letter was written from the Front, eight days before the start of the Somme offensive. In it Gilson describes how letters from other members of TCBS brought him comfort and amusement in the trenches:

I have never felt more forcibly than in the last few weeks, the truth of your words about the oasis of TCBSianism. Life just now is a veritable desert: a fiery one. The TCBS never despised the ordeal & I don't think they underrated it, mine has of late increased in intensity.

None the less I am cheerful enough & more grateful than I can say for the breaths of cool fresh air which the various members of the TCBS have given me from time to time . . . Your [letter] which found me when I returned from a night working party, on which one of my best friends among our officers was seriously wounded, was amazingly refreshing.

This was Gilson's last letter to Tolkien. He was killed on the first day of the Somme.

Family papers 2/1(1)

55 Letter from G.B. Smith, 15 July 1916. Tolkien had hoped to join Smith in the 19th Lancashire Fusiliers but had instead been appointed to the 11th. The 19th Battalion had been involved in the opening days of the Battle, but Smith had survived. He only heard of Gilson's death when he briefly returned from the Front Line. In contrast to the optimism of his February letter (item 53), he wrote to Tolkien:

I saw in the paper this morning that Rob has been killed.

I am safe, but what does that matter?

Do please stick to me, you and Christopher. I am very tired and most frightfully depressed at this worst of news.

Now one realizes in despair what the TCBS really was.

O my dear John Ronald what ever are we going to do?

Tolkien did not receive the letter immediately, as 'B' Company had been sent to the 'animal horror' (*Biography*, p.84) of the Front the day before, where many of his Battalion were killed by machine-gun fire.

Family papers 2/2(1)

56 Memorial card for R.Q. Gilson, July 1916. The memorial card that Rob Gilson's family sent to friends contained a summary of his short life, together with a reproduction of one of his sketches, drawn in Lisieux in 1912. Cary Gilson, Tolkien's ex-Headmaster, wrote to him to say that he wished he and other old men of his generation could be sent to die instead of their sons.

Family papers 2/1(4)

57 Letter from Christopher Wiseman, 16 December 1916. Christopher Wiseman was serving in the navy and was therefore the only member of the TCBS not involved in the Battle of the Somme. On 3 December, G.B. Smith had been injured by shells bursting behind Allied lines. Like many wounded soldiers at this time, he contracted gas-gangrene and died of his wounds a few days later. Wiseman wrote to Tolkien:



From one of R.Q.G.'s Sketch Books.



LIEUTENANT ROBERT QUILTER GILSON.

Suffolk Regiment.

BORN AT HARROW, 25th OCTOBER, 1893.

KING EDWARD'S SCHOOL, BIRMINGHAM, 1909-1912.

TRINITY COLLEGE, CAMBRIDGE, 1912-1914.

KILLED IN ACTION, near LA BOISSILLIE, in France, 1st JULY, 1916.

Salute the sacred dead
Who went and who return not,—say not so!
We rather seem the dead, that stayed behind.
Blow, trumpets, all your exultations blow!
For never shall their aureoled presence lack.
They come transfigured back
Secure from change in their high-hearted ways
Beautiful evermore, and with the rays
Of morn on their white shields of Expectation.

56

Memorial card, 1916

I have just received news from home about G.B.S., who has succumbed to injuries received from shells bursting on Dec. 3rd. I can't say very much about it now. I humbly pray Almighty God I may be accounted worthy of him.

Tolkien himself had been invalided back to England on 8 November with trench fever. He did not return to France and in the winter of 1916 began work on the 'Silmarillion'-mythology (items 192-223).

Family papers 2/2(2)

58 Letter from Mrs. Ruth Smith, 22 December 1916. G.B. Smith's mother answered Tolkien's letter of condolence with a long and harrowing account of her son's death. 'You can imagine what [h]is loss is to me. he [sic] had never left home until going to Oxford & we built many castles in the air of the life we should have to-gether after the War'. The letter concluded by asking Tolkien if he could help to get Smith's poetry published. Mrs. Smith also referred to her younger son, Roger, who had 'looked up to & admired his brother, & will be heart-broken'. Roger, too, was serving in France and was himself killed eight weeks later. 'I cannot believe the terrible thing that has befallen me', Mrs. Smith wrote to Tolkien on 6 March 1917. 'To lose two such fine sons is indeed crushing'.

Family papers 2/1(2)

59 G.B. Smith, *A Spring Harvest* (1918). With the help of Dickie Reynolds, Tolkien edited a volume of Smith's poems that was published in June 1918. 'All those thin 1914-18 vols., with a photogravure frontispiece of a young officer and introduction by a don or housemaster', as Philip Larkin once described the sad collections of this period (MS. Pym 151, fol.67). Tolkien wrote a brief introductory note to the volume, which contains fifty-one of Smith's poems written between 1910 and 1916.

28001 e. 1875, title-page

Mrs. Weatherhead
10 Wilkin St.
off Ladbroke St.
off Walton Rd
Aug.. 25.8.16

Dear Sir.

I want to ask you
can you give me any news.
about my dear son.. death.
8967. Thos. Gaskin.. I thought
with him being your servant
you would be able to tell
me something about him. I
only got the sad. news. on Friday
morning last. but I believe
the news was sent to our
old address. in manchester were
he lived nearly three weeks.

60

60 Letter from a soldier's mother, 25 August 1916. Among his papers relating to the war Tolkien kept several letters from the families of men killed in the summer of 1916, including one from a Mrs. Weatherhead enquiring about her son who had joined up three weeks previously [the original punctuation and spelling are reproduced]:

I. want to ask you can you give me any news. about my. dear son.. death. 8967. Thos. Gaskin.. I. thought with him being your servant you would be able to tell me something about him. I only got the sad. news. on Friday morning last. but I believe the news was sent to our old address. in manchester were he joined nearly. three weeks ago.. I have been to manchester to see if this was. right. and. what I heard there it was. only to true. so I would. ask you Sir. if it lays in your. power. to let me know any. thing you know about my. dear lad.. death.

Family papers 2/6(m)

61 Demobilization ration book. After his experiences in the trenches Tolkien spent the rest of the war in England, often in hospital, where he was able to devote time to his evolving 'Silmarillion'-mythology. He was not, however, discharged from the army until 16 July 1919, by which time he was back in Oxford and the father of a son (items 62-3). His demobilization papers included the food ration book exhibited here.

Family papers 2/6(l)

4 LEXICOGRAPHY AND LEEDS

When the war ended on 11 November 1918, Tolkien was without a job. However, William Craigie who had taught him Icelandic as an undergraduate was also on the staff of the *New* (later *Oxford*) *English Dictionary* at Oxford and was able to offer him work as an assistant lexicographer, researching the derivations of words. Tolkien and his family moved to rooms at 50 St. John Street, and later rented a house in what is now Pusey Street. For the next two years Tolkien worked as a lexicographer, supplementing his income with English tutoring, mainly for the women's colleges, Lady Margaret Hall and St. Hugh's. In 1920 he was appointed Reader in English Language at Leeds University, where he remained, first as Reader and later as Professor, until 1925. During his time on the *Dictionary* and at Leeds he continued to evolve his 'Silmarillion'-mythology and also began several academic projects that were to occupy him for much of his working life. It was at Leeds, too, that he began to send his children a series of paintings and letters from 'Father Christmas' (items 75–86).



62 John's birth. Tolkien's first child was born on 16 November 1917. He was named John for both his great-grandfathers, Francis for Father Francis Morgan and Reuel after his father and grandfather. Tolkien was unable to visit Edith until a week after the baby's birth. Aunt May Incledon, Mabel's sister, wrote reassuringly:

Dear old Pet & ancient Lamb,

It is wonderful isn't it? Don't worry Dearie for I know how bad it must have seemed to be away from it all, but it is wonderful how mothers pick up. Give them 3 days & they begin to be drunk with joy & pick up all the threads again.

May's letter was written from the International Club for Psychical Research of which she had become an enthusiastic member after her husband had forbidden her to practise as a Roman Catholic (item 12).

Family papers 1/26

63 'John's Language'. In 1919, when John was two years old, Tolkien began keeping a notebook in which he recorded his son's pronunciation and use of words. John's vocabulary included the normal childish designations: 'kwaekwaek' for bird and 'biki' for biscuit, but 'bou(wou)', his father noted severely, was a 'grown-up perversion'. Tolkien also kept a similar notebook after the birth of his next child, Michael, in October 1920.

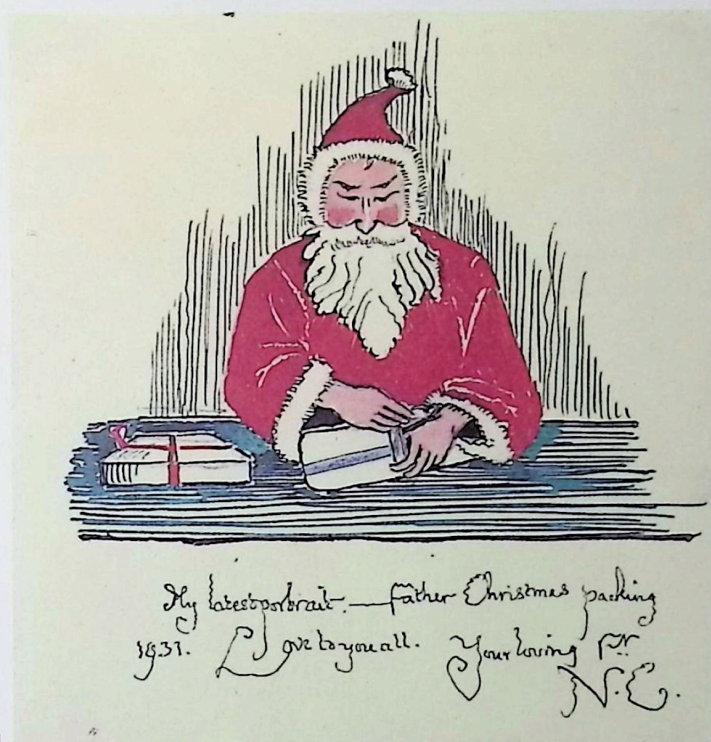
Family papers 2/9(b), fols.2^v–3

64 'High Life at Gipsy Green'. As a young man, Tolkien made a series of light-hearted sketches, including one where he depicted scenes from his early married life in which Edith and the baby figured prominently.

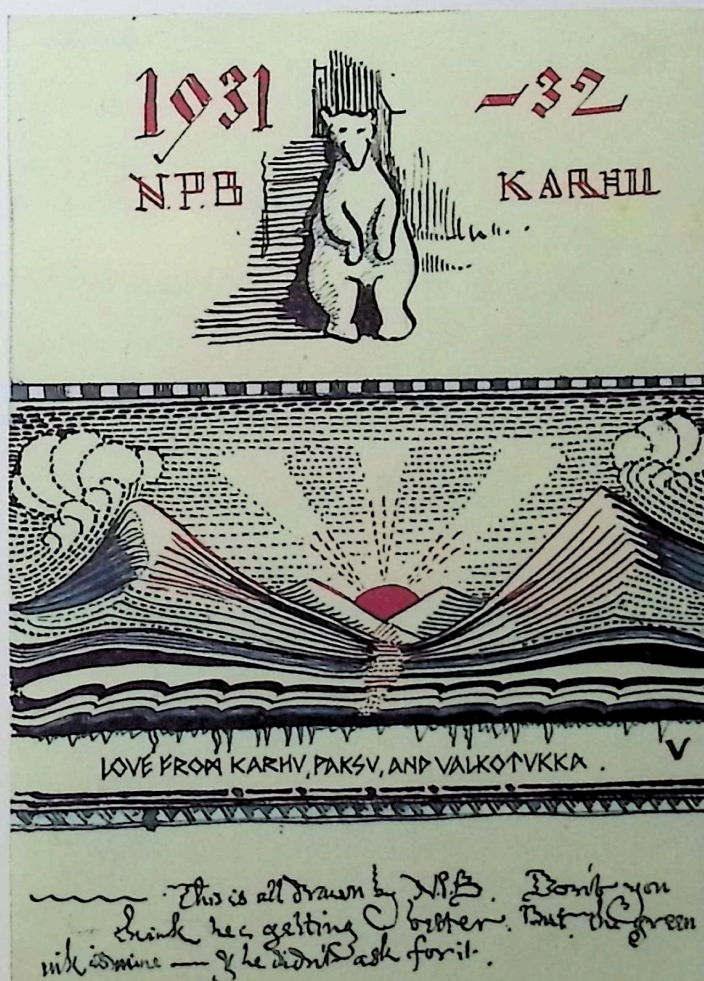
MS. Tolkien drawings 86, fol.25^v

65 *New English Dictionary*. His work as an assistant lexicographer involved Tolkien in research into the history and derivation of words. He said of his time at the *Dictionary*: 'I learned more in those two years than in any other equal period of my life', whilst Henry Bradley, the editor of the *Dictionary*, reported: 'I have never known a man of his age who was in these respects [Anglo-Saxon and Germanic languages] his equal' (*Biography* p.101). Notes that Tolkien made on





81



82

TOP Self-portrait by Father Christmas, 1931
ABOVE Christmas card from Polar Bear, 1931

67 Leeds examination paper. Tolkien was a dedicated and hard-working teacher, who was encouraged by George Gordon to develop his subject. The academic working-papers that Tolkien preserved from this period of his life demonstrate how assiduously he prepared for his classes, duplicating notes for his students as well as producing many hundreds of pages for his own use. An English Language examination paper for 6 June 1916 shows that candidates were required to answer three translation and five essay questions on topics like: 'Is the foreign element beneficial to the English Language?' and 'Describe phonetically the sound-change known as *i*-mutation'.

Tolkien A4/1, fol.82

68 *A Middle English Vocabulary* (1922). While he was still at the *Dictionary*, Tolkien had begun compiling a glossary to accompany a book of Middle English extracts that Kenneth Sisam was editing. In what was to become characteristic of 'that great, but dilatory and unmethodical man', as C.S. Lewis described him in 1950 (*Letters* no.92, p.440, footnote 2), Tolkien set about the task with such enormous precision and wealth of detail that Sisam's *Fourteenth Century Verse & Prose* had to be published in 1921 without its glossary. Tolkien's *Vocabulary* appeared in 1922 and was bound with subsequent editions of *Verse & Prose* with a separate title page, as shown in Tolkien's own copy which is exhibited here.

Tolkien E16/12, second title-page

69 Eric Valentine Gordon, an undated photograph. In 1922 E.V. Gordon joined the staff of the English Department at Leeds as a junior lecturer. A former student of Tolkien's in Oxford (and not related to George Gordon) he was 'an industrious little devil', as Tolkien called him, and quickly became a 'devoted friend and pal' and collaborator on academic projects (*Biography*, pp.104–5). When Tolkien left Leeds, Gordon was appointed his successor. He died suddenly in 1938 at the age of fifty-two, depriving Tolkien not only of a friend but of a disciplined and enthusiastic joint editor.

2569 d. 785, p.115 (photogr.)

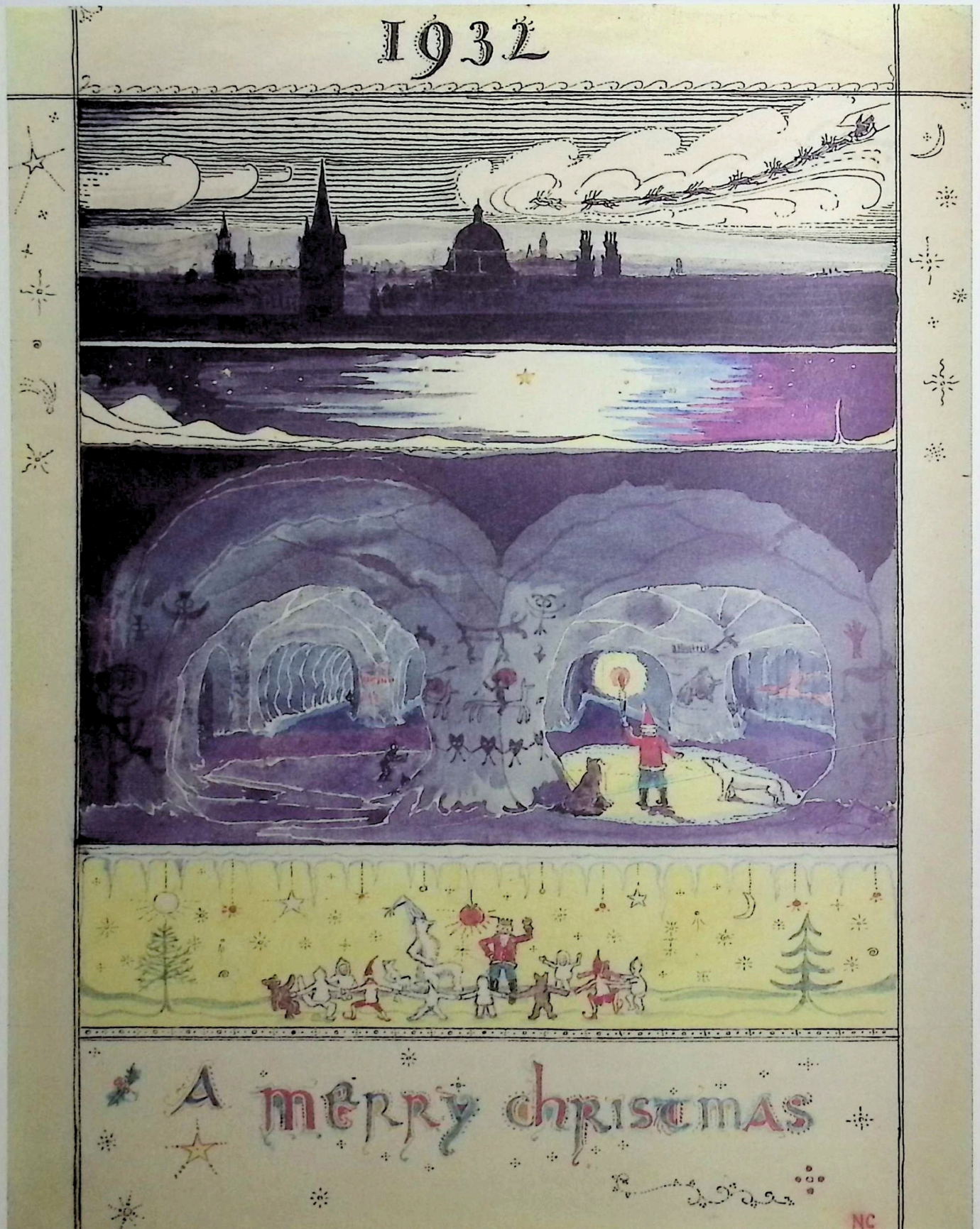
70 *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight* (1925). Gordon's industry and Tolkien's scholarship combined to produce an edition of the Middle English poem *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight* in less than four years. It was a major contribution to medieval studies at the time and made the text of the poem widely available to students of the period. C.S. Lewis owned a copy which he annotated extensively throughout. It is opened to display his notes on lines 555–621, together with a marginal sketch of a suit of armour. Lewis, even more than Gordon, became Tolkien's friend and collaborator when they met in Oxford in 1926 (item 224).

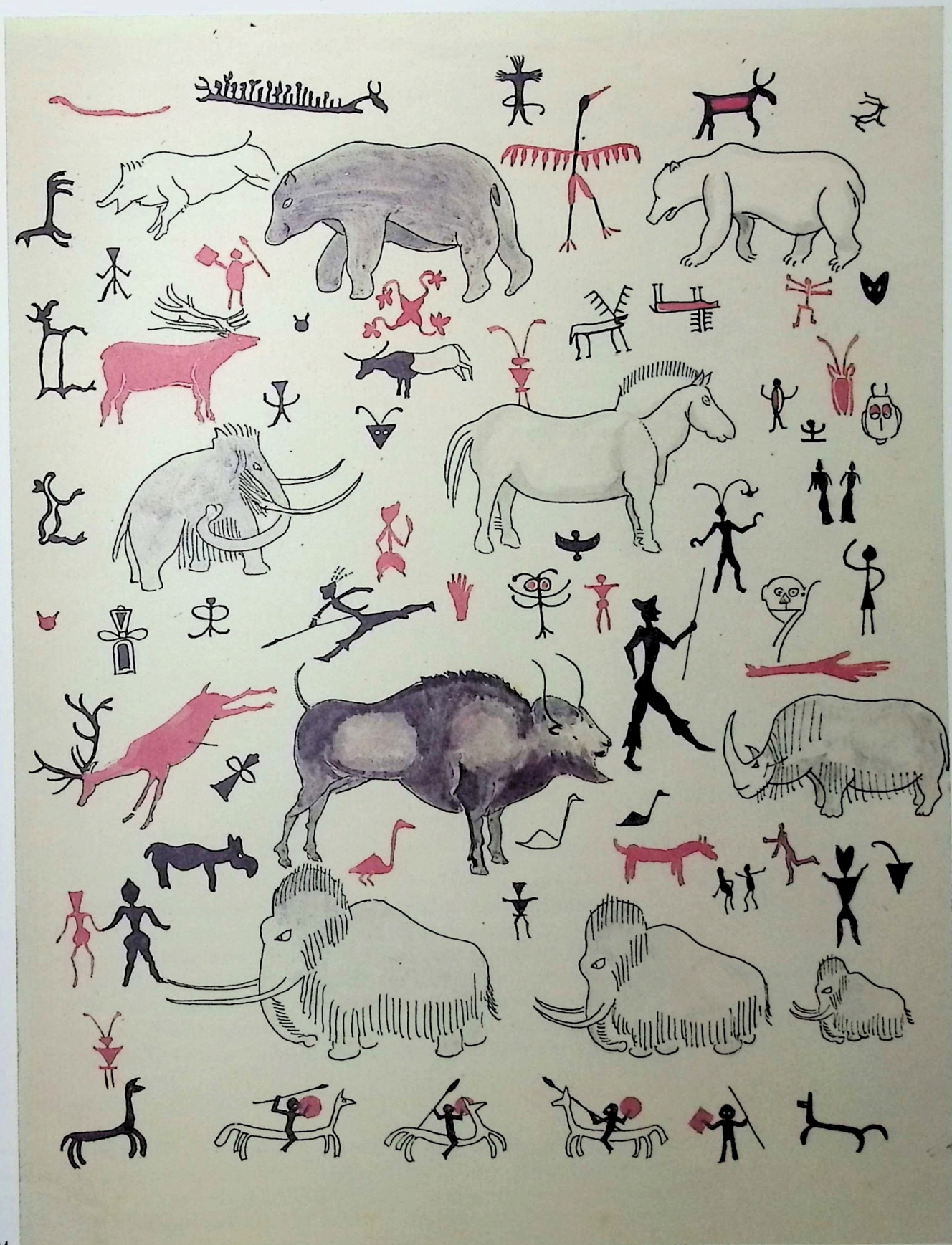
Arch. H e.55, pp.18–19

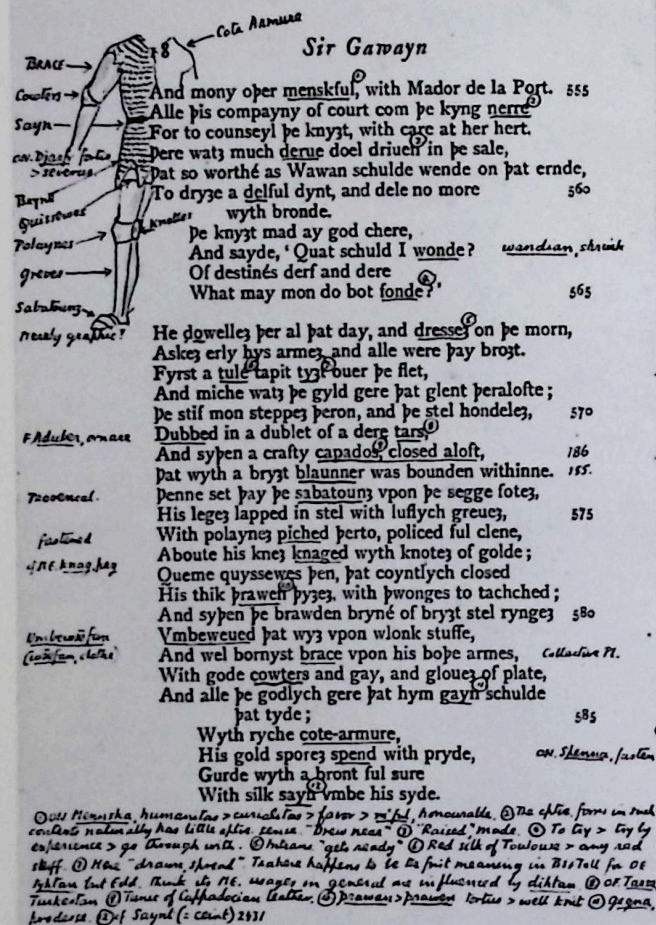
71 *Songs for the Philologists* (1936). Tolkien and Gordon founded the Viking Club for their English students, who met regularly to drink beer, read sagas and sing comic songs, most of which were written by Tolkien and Gordon themselves. Some of the songs and comic poems were privately printed by the English Department at University College, London, in 1936. The cover of *Songs for the Philologists*, together with the first four verses of 'The Root of the Boot', an early version of 'The Stone Troll', is exhibited here.

3967 e. 145, cover and photocopy of p.20









Sir Gawain and the Green Knight, 1925

72 *Some Contributions to Middle-English Lexicography* (1925). In this short article which appeared in the first volume of the *Review of English Studies* for April 1925, Tolkien discussed the etymology of various Middle English words, with particular reference to the West Midlands dialect. His interest in the 'Katherine Group' of manuscripts (MS. Bodley 34) and the devotional text, *Ancrene Wisse*, was to occupy him for most of his professional working life, although his edition of *Ancrene Wisse* was not published until 1962 (items 226–7).

30241 d. 13, cover

73 ‘Why the Man in the Moon Came Down too Soon’. Whilst he was at Leeds Tolkien continued to write poetry, some of it related to his evolving ‘Silmarillion’-mythology, some of it – as in *Songs for the Philologists* – comic in intent. Three early poems were published in *A Northern Venture* (Leeds, 1923), which is open to display the first three verses of Tolkien’s version of the nursery rhyme, ‘Why

& þe Grene Nynzt 19
 When he watȝ hasped in armes, his harnays watȝ oe Hurlan
 ryche: f. 99^a
 þe lest lachet oþer loupe lemed of golde. 591
 So harnayst as he watȝ he herkeñez his masse,
 Offred and honoured at þe heȝe auter.
 Syþen he comeȝ to þe kyng and to his cort-fereȝ,
 Lacheȝ luffy his leue at lordesȝ and ladyesȝ; 595
 And þay hym kyst and conueyed, bikende hym to
 Kryst.
 Bi þat watȝ Gryngolet^N grayth, and gurde with a sadel
 þat glemed ful gayly with mony golde srengeȝ,
Ayquere ful nwe, for þat note ryched,^{oe Note}
 þe byrdel barred aboute, with bryst golde bounden; 600
 þe apparayl of þe paytture and of þe proude skyrtesȝ,
 þe cpropore and þe couertor, acorded wyth þe arsouneȝ; 605
 And al watȝ rayled on red, ryche golde nayleȝ,
 þat al glytered and glemt as glem of þe sunne.
 Þenne hentes he þe helme, and hastily hit kysses, 605
 þat watȝ stapled styfly, and stoffed wythinne.
 Hit watȝ hyȝe on his hede, hasped bihynde,
 Wyth a lytli vryssoun ouer þe auentayle,
 Enbrawden and bounden wyth þe best gemmeȝ
 On brode sylkyn borde, and brydȝes on semeȝ, 610
 As papiayes paynted pernyng bitwene,
 Tortors and trufoles entayled so byk
 As mony burde peraboute had ben seuen wynter
 in tounne.
 þe cercle watȝ more o prys 615
 þat vmbeclappȝ hys crownne,
 Of diamanteȝ a deuyȝ
 þat boþe were bryȝt and broun.^{ad libitum}
 Then þay schewed hym þe schelde, þat was of schyr
 goulez
 Wyth þe pentangel depaynt of pure golde hweȝ. 620
 He brayȝes hit bi þe bauderyȝ, aboute þe hals kestes,
 ① Participle agreeing with masse ② Etch derive the form from en ryche but sense from
 the influence of oe. Recurre (strick = white = unruled = arrange, order, direct) ③ Get up for
 the occasion ④ According to Edd. "It was all arrayed on a red background, was all clothed
 with rich gold nauts - the second half of the line specifying the first." ⑤ At intervals ⑥ True
 love knots ⑦ Entailler = to carve = to depict in needlework ⑧ Many a lady had been at
 the job ⑨ A good passage for the meaning of brun ⑩ The attribution of the pentangle to
 Gawain who usually had other arms is probably an imposition by the poet, in conformity
 with the strongly chivalric character of his work. L 623 repeats the same way.

the Man in the Moon Came Down too Soon', and the closing lines of 'Tha Eadigan Saelidan. The Happy Mariners':

Ye follow Earendel through the West,
The shining mariner, to Islands blest.

2805 f. 312, pp.16–17

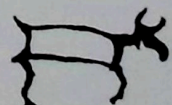
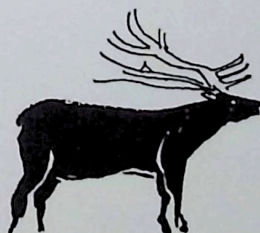
74 'A Shop on the Edge of the Hills of Fairy Land'. At Leeds Tolkien also began to tell stories and paint pictures for his children. The watercolour of 'Gog's Shop' was made in 1924. Tolkien annotated it: 'Drawn for John, Darnley Road, Leeds 1924. Torn up by Chris accidentally, Sept. 1936'. Christopher was Tolkien's third child, born in 1924 and named for Christopher Wiseman.

MS. Tolkien drawings 86, fol.28



75–86 The 'Father Christmas' letters, 1920–43. During the Christmas holidays after Tolkien's first term at Leeds, John – then aged three – asked him what Father Christmas was like and where he lived. In response to his question Tolkien sent the first of what was to be a series of letters and pictures to his children, purporting to come from Father Christmas. They continued to arrive until 1943 during the childhoods of John, Michael, Christopher and Priscilla (born in 1929). The letters were typically written in coloured inks in a very shaky hand, accompanied by watercolours and drawings illustrating events in Father Christmas's year. They were delivered in decorated envelopes, sometimes dusted with glittering 'snow', bearing Polar stamps and franked 'North Pole' (77–8). The first letter and picture (75–6) were relatively simple affairs, but as time passed, the letters became longer and the illustrations more elaborate, such as the letter for 1932 describing a *Hobbit*-like attack by goblins (83) which was accompanied by a series of prehistoric drawings from the Goblins' cave walls (84). As the series developed, Father Christmas also acquired a group of helpers: Snow-elves, Snow-men, Red Gnomes, an Elvish secretary called Ilbereth, and the accident-prone Polar Bear, whose mishaps form the subject of several letters (79–80). With the exception of the letter sent to Priscilla in 1939 (86) all of the items on display were published in *The Father Christmas Letters*, edited by Baillie Tolkien in 1976, which was subsequently translated into several languages, including French, German, Dutch, Japanese and Swedish.

MSS. Tolkien drawings 37–8; 40–1; 46; 49; 55–8; 61; 83, fol.54





133



134

TOP 'Maddo', 1928
ABOVE 'Owlamoo', 1928

5 'Mr. Baggins'

In the summer of 1925, William Craigie resigned as Rawlinson and Bosworth Professor of Anglo-Saxon at Oxford. Tolkien, who had been made Professor at Leeds in 1924, decided to apply for the job (*Letters*, pp.12–13). His ex-tutor Kenneth Sisam was also a candidate, but Tolkien was appointed in July and began work in Oxford in October, although for the first year of his appointment he continued to teach at Leeds as well as at Oxford.

The next few years were a period of intense productivity in which he not only engaged in a hectic programme of teaching, administration and academic research, but also wrote and illustrated much of the 'Silmarillion'-mythology and associated languages, together with many stories for his children, the most famous of which was *The Hobbit*.

The story of its genesis is by now almost as well-known as the work itself. Nearly twenty years after its first publication Tolkien wrote to W.H. Auden: 'All I remember about the start of *The Hobbit* is sitting correcting School Certificate papers . . . On a blank leaf I scrawled: "In a hole in the ground there lived a hobbit." I did not and do not know why. I did nothing about it, for a long time, and for some years I got no further than the production of Thrór's Map' (*Letters*, p.215, but see also *Biography*, pp.177–8 for differing accounts).

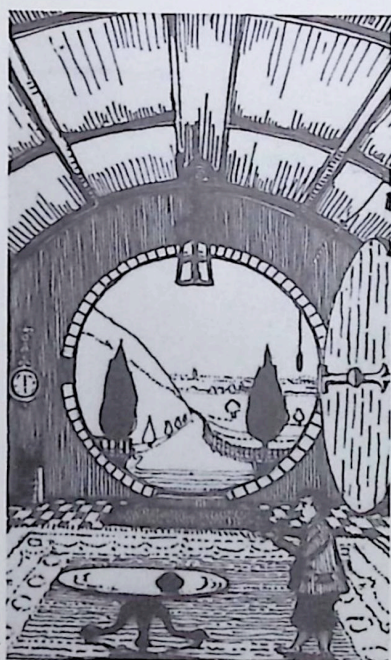
However, a text of the story was in existence by 1932, when it was read by C.S. Lewis, although it was incomplete and broke off before the death of Smaug. In 1936, Elaine Griffiths, a former pupil of Tolkien's, was working on J.R. Clark Hall's translation of *Beowulf* for Allen & Unwin when she was visited by Susan Dagnall, a fellow Oxford graduate and member of Allen & Unwin's staff. Griffiths told her about the typescript of *The Hobbit*, which she had read, and after she too had read it, Dagnall urged Tolkien to finish the story and submit it to Allen & Unwin for publication.

On 3 October 1936 Tolkien sent the completed typescript to the publishers, where the firm's chairman Stanley Unwin gave it to his ten-year-old son Rayner to read. He was paid a shilling for his report:

Bilbo Baggins was a hobbit who lived in his hobbit-hole and *never* went for adventures, at last Gandalf the wizard and his dwarves persuaded him to go. He had a very exiting time fighting goblins and wargs. at last they got to the lonley mountain; Smaug, the dragon who gawreds it is killed and after a terrific battle with goblins he returned home – rich! This book, with the help of maps, does not need any illustrations it is good and should appeal to all children between the ages of 5 and 9. (*Biography*, pp.180–1).

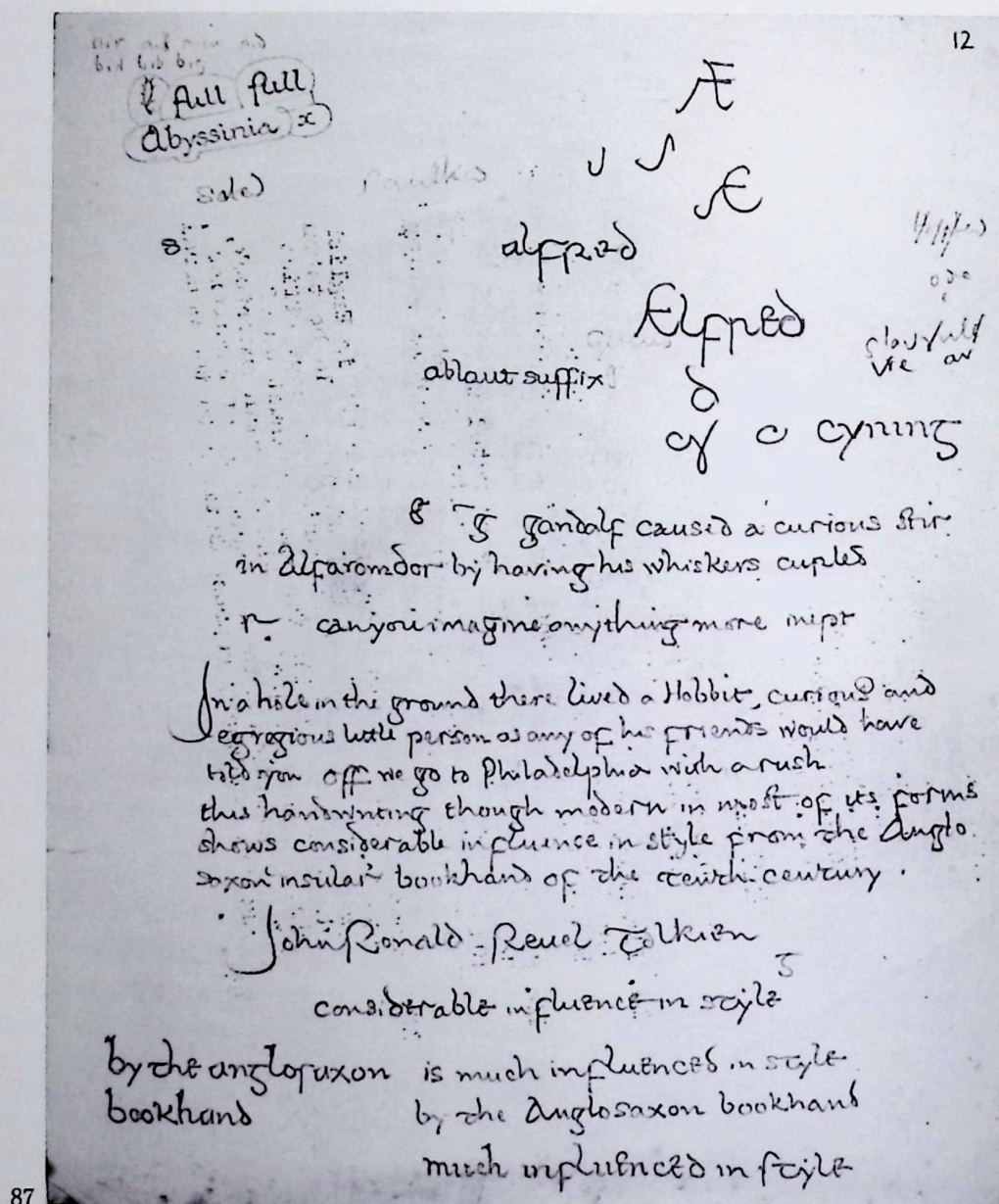
Allen & Unwin accepted the book for publication and decided to include several of Tolkien's monochrome illustrations as well as the maps mentioned by Rayner Unwin.

The Hobbit was published on 21 September 1937 and was so popular that a reprint was called for almost immediately. The first American edition appeared in 1938 and the book has subsequently been translated into many languages, including Swedish, Bulgarian, Hebrew, French, Estonian and Japanese (items 123–8). In 1991 it was reported that 35 million copies of *The Hobbit* had been sold world-wide, making it the world's best-selling single work of fiction.



'The Hall at Bag-End'



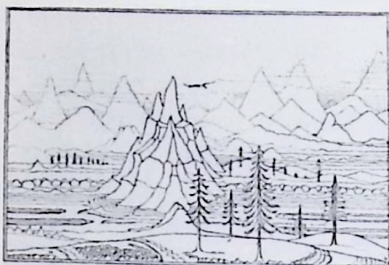


87

87 Hobbit doodles. No manuscript apparently survives of the School Certificate paper with Tolkien's famous first jotting of *The Hobbit* on the back. In 1957 he sold the manuscripts and drafts of *The Hobbit*, *The Lord of the Rings*, *Farmer Giles of Ham* and *Mr. Bliss* to Marquette University, a Catholic institution in America, who paid him \$5000 (£1,250) for them. However, among his academic working papers which remained in England are some interesting calligraphic doodles written after the publication of *The Hobbit*, on the back of a torn sheet of minutes from an English Faculty Board Meeting of 27 October 1939. Tolkien seems to have been practising Anglo-Saxon insular bookhand and has written out his name ('John Ronald Reuel Tolkien') and several words and phrases ('Abyssinia', 'ablaut suffix', 'considerable influence in style') using that form of handwriting. Among the longer phrases he has doodled occur the words: 'Gandalf caused a curious stir in Alfaramdor by having his whiskers curled',

followed by: 'can you imagine anything more inept'. A new sentence then begins: 'In a hole in the ground there lived a Hobbit, curious and egregious little person as any of his friends would have told you'.

Tolkien A14/1, fol.12



The Misty Mountains looking West from the Eye towards Gollum's Gate

88–98 Eleven pen-and-ink drawings. Tolkien had drawn several pictures to accompany what he called the 'home manuscript' of *The Hobbit* (*Letters*, p.14). Although he had not originally intended them for publication, when Allen & Unwin decided that the book should be illustrated, Tolkien was able to supply his publishers with ten pen-and-ink drawings to accompany the text and two endpapers. Items 89–97 were used as text-illustrations: 'The Hill: Hobbiton across the water' (89), 'The Trolls' (90), 'The Mountain-path' (91), 'The Misty Mountains looking West' (92), 'Beorn's Hall' (93), 'The Elvenking's Gate' (94), 'Lake Town' (95), 'The Front Gate' (96) and 'The Hall at Bag-End' (97). 'Thror's Map' (88) and 'Wilderland' (98) were used as endpapers, although in the first edition red ink was substituted for blue. The tenth illustration, 'Mirkwood', was taken from a watercolour which related to the 'Silmarillion'-mythology and is shown as item 210. A few months before publication, Tolkien wrote to Allen & Unwin: 'I am still surprised that these indifferent pictures have been accepted at all, and that you have taken so much trouble with them' (*Letters*, p.16).

MSS. Tolkien drawings 7, 9, 13–14, 17, 19, 23–5, 34–5

99 Hobbit dust-jacket. Encouraged by Allen & Unwin's reception of his line-drawings, Tolkien began to design a dust-jacket for *The Hobbit*. On 13 April 1937 he submitted a draft to his publishers. In an accompanying letter he wrote:

I discovered (as I anticipated) that it was rather beyond my craft and experience. But perhaps the general design would do?

I foresee the main objections.

There are too many colours: blue, green, red, black . . . This could be met, with possible improvement, by substituting *white* for *red*; and omitting the sun, or drawing a line round it. The presence of the sun and moon in the sky together refers to the magic attaching to the door . . .

In redrawing the whole thing could be reduced – if you think the runes are attractive. Though magical in appearance they merely run: *The Hobbit or There and Back Again, being the record of a year's journey made by Bilbo Baggins; compiled from his memoirs by J.R.R. Tolkien and published by George Allen & Unwin.* (*Letters*, pp.16–17).

MS. Tolkien drawings 32

100–4 Five watercolours. On 11 May 1937 Allen & Unwin wrote to Tolkien to say that they had interested an 'outstanding firm of American publishers' in *The Hobbit* (*Letters*, p.17). The publishers were Houghton Mifflin, who also wanted a number of colour illustrations to accompany the text. Charles Furth, one of the editorial staff at Allen & Unwin, asked Tolkien if he could supply the pictures himself. Tolkien agreed, and between 11 May and 31 August painted five watercolours: 'The Hill: Hobbiton-across-the-Water' (100), 'Rivendell' (101), 'Bilbo woke with the early sun in his eyes' (102), 'Bilbo comes to the Huts of the Raft-elves' (103) and 'Conversation with Smaug' (104). The first American edition of *The Hobbit* appeared in 1938 with four of the watercolours, excluding 'Bilbo comes to the Huts of the Raft-elves'. Tolkien was pleased with the colour-reproduction but considered that the picture of Rivendell had been 'spoilt

... by slicing the top and cutting out the ornament at the bottom' (*Letters*, p.34). Four of the watercolours were also reproduced in the second British impression of *The Hobbit*, which was published before the first American edition. To Tolkien's regret (*Letters*, p.27) 'Bilbo woke', his picture of an eagle that had been inspired by a painting by Archibald Thorburn, was omitted from the British edition.

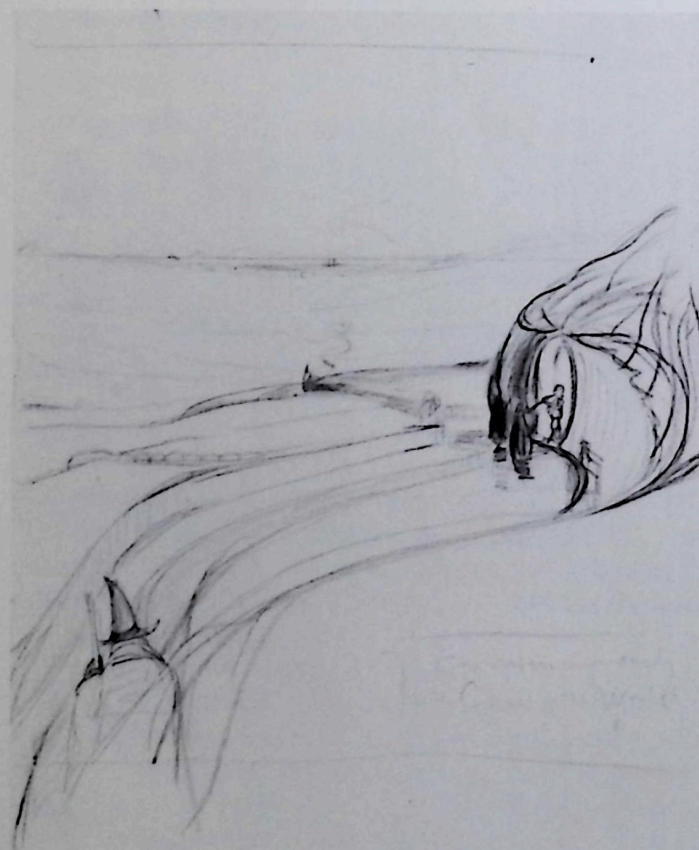
MSS. Tolkien drawings 26-30

105-6 Early sketches. As well as the illustrations that were published in 1937-8, Tolkien also made numerous other drawings of scenes from *The Hobbit*. None of them are dated but the pencil and crayon sketches, 'One Morning early in the Quiet of the World' (105) and 'Gandalf' at Bilbo's door (106) appear to be the earliest.

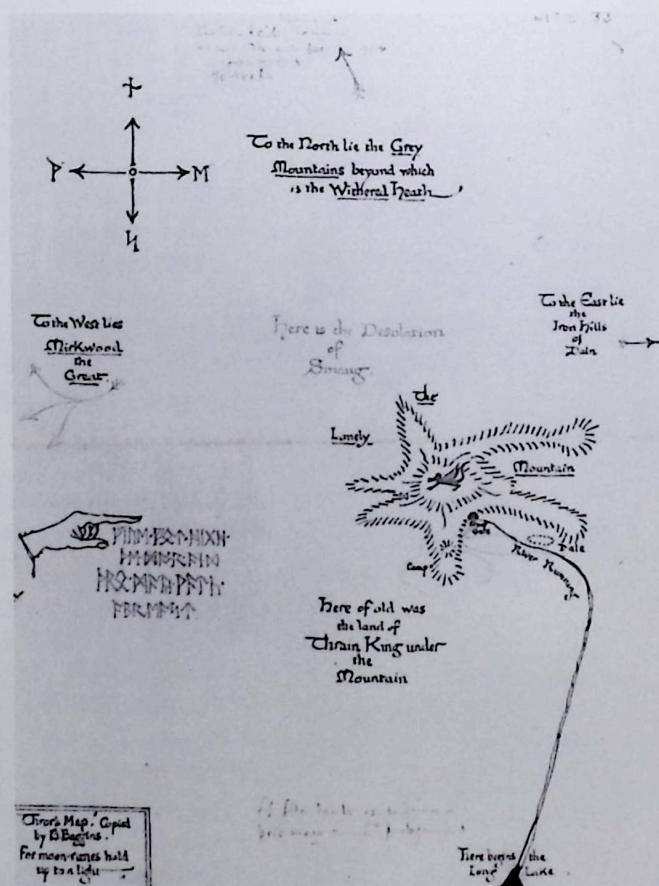
MSS. Tolkien drawings 1-2

107 'Thror's Map. Copied by B. Baggins'. Tolkien originally intended his drawing of Bilbo's copy of Thror's chart for publication. It was to have been inserted into the book in Chapter 1, at the point in the story where Gandalf first shows the 'piece of parchment rather like a map' to Thorin and his companions. The moon runes are written in mirror-form on the back of the page so that when it is held up to a light the runes can be read through the paper, as Elrond does in Chapter 3. In the event, the chart was not printed because it would have added too much to the cost of the book.

MS. Tolkien drawings 33



105



107



108

108 'The Three Trolls are turned to Stone'. Tolkien made several drawings of the Trolls before choosing for publication the more sinister version which depicts the Trolls hiding behind trees in the dark (item 90). 'The Three Trolls are turned to Stone' shows them caught by the dawn after being tricked by Gandalf. The drawing was not published until after Tolkien's death, when it appeared in a coloured version by H.E. Riddett in *The J.R.R. Tolkien Calendar 1979* and subsequently in *Pictures* (1979).

MS. Tolkien drawings 89, fol.21

109 'Rivendell looking East'. As well as painting the watercolour 'Rivendell' (item 101), Tolkien also made two crayon sketches of the valley. 'Rivendell looking East' appeared in a truncated form in *The Lord of the Rings Calendar 1977* and in its restored version in *Pictures*. A drawing of the enclosed cleft of the valley looking West was shown in the Bodleian's 1987 *Hobbit* exhibition. Although normally ascribed to the period of *The Hobbit*, it is possible that both sketches were in fact made after the watercolour and belong with the illustrations to *The Lord of the Rings* (*Pictures*, forthcoming new edition).

MS. Tolkien drawings 12

110 'Smaug flies round the Mountain'. This sombrely-painted watercolour was not published until 1979, when it appeared in both *The J.R.R. Tolkien Calendar* and in *Pictures*. In a letter to the *Observer* on 20 February 1938 Tolkien explained that the name Smaug was: 'a low philological jest . . . the past tense of the primitive Germanic verb *Smugan*, to squeeze through a hole' (*Letters*, p.31).

MS. Tolkien drawings 89, fol.24

111 'Death of Smaug'. Tolkien made a vivid and slightly impressionistic crayon sketch of Smaug's death which was not used in any of the early editions

of *The Hobbit* but subsequently became the cover of a 1966 British paperback edition. He wrote to Rayner Unwin in 1965 to say that he thought he had made the drawing in 1936, but was 'not very happy about the use of this scrawl as a cover. It seems too much in the modern mode in which those who can draw try to conceal it. But perhaps there is a distinction between their productions and one by a man who obviously cannot draw what he sees' (*Letters*, pp.364–5).

MS. Tolkien drawings 31

112 Letter from Aunt Jane Neave, 1 October 1937. A few days after *The Hobbit* was published, Tolkien received a letter from his mother's younger sister asking for a copy:

This sounds so exciting: – what is it? – A fairy story? A novel? What? that I hasten to do all but *demand* instant enlightenment . . . I *think* unless I become altogether importunate and aggressive I may never hear more of it!

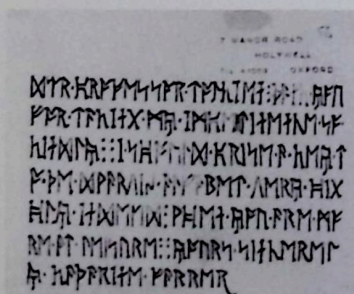
Tolkien had stayed with his aunt as a child in 1904 when his mother was ill, and it was in her company that he went to Switzerland after leaving school in 1911. He kept in touch with his 'shrewd sound-hearted' aunt (*Letters*, p.308) throughout her life and it was at her suggestion that he published *The Adventures of Tom Bombadil* in 1962 (items 235–8). A remarkable woman, 'one of the first . . . to take a science degree', Tolkien once boasted (*Letters*, p.308), she died in 1963 at the age of ninety-two.

MS. Tolkien 21, fol.125

113 Letter from Arthur Ransome, 13 December 1937. A few weeks after the publication of *The Hobbit* Tolkien and his publishers began to be inundated with letters, including one from Arthur Ransome whose books Tolkien's children greatly admired. Ransome described himself as 'a humble hobbit-fancier (and one certain that your book will be many times reprinted)', but complained about the use of the term 'men' to cover hobbits, dwarves, elves, goblins and dragons. In response, Tolkien wrote to Allen & Unwin on 19 December, suggesting amendments that might be made to a later edition. In the same letter he also mentioned that he had begun 'a new story about Hobbits' – the start of what was to be *The Lord of the Rings* (see p.57 below).

MS. Tolkien 21, fol.91

114



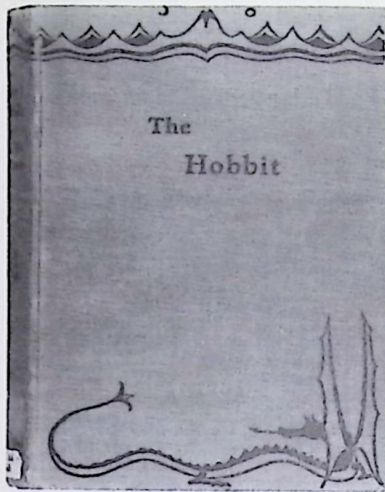
114 Postcard in runic. In December 1937 Katharine Farrer, a writer of detective stories and wife of the Oxford theologian Austin Farrer, wrote to Tolkien using the *Hobbit* system of runes. Her postcard was sent in answer to one from Tolkien, also written in runic. It reads:

Dear Professor Tolkien, Thank you for taking my impertinence so kindly. I should prize a key to the Dwarvish alphabet very highly indeed, when you are more at leisure. Yours sincerely Katharine Farrer

Reactions to *The Hobbit* in Oxford were mixed, as Tolkien reported to Stanley Unwin three weeks after its publication: 'The attitude is (as I foresaw) not unmixed with surprise and a little pity' (*Letters*, p.24). He was on a Leverhulme Research Fellowship at the time and ruefully noted: 'I shall now find it very hard to make people believe that this is not the major fruits of "research" 1936–7!' (*Letters*, p.19).

MS. Tolkien 21, fol.56

115



115 *Hobbit* first edition. A month after its publication, Stanley Unwin wrote to Tolkien to say that he had 'not the slightest doubt' that *The Hobbit* would establish Tolkien's reputation as an author (*Letters*, p.25). By Christmas, the first edition had sold out and the demand for the reprint was so acute that part of it had to be collected from the printers by private car. The Bodleian's copy of the first edition was received by the Library under the terms of the Copyright Act on 8 October 1937, seventeen days after publication. Tolkien himself designed the decorations on the upper and lower boards and the spine.

Arch. AA e.143, cover

116–17 Two versions of Chapter 5. When Tolkien wrote *The Hobbit* he had not planned for the story to have a sequel. In 1937, Bilbo's ring was magical but it was not the 'One Ring'. Similarly, although Gollum was portrayed as a repulsive and even murderous figure, Tolkien nevertheless intended him to keep his word and give the ring to Bilbo after he had won the riddle-game described in Chapter 5. However, when *The Lord of the Rings* was nearly finished in 1947, Tolkien realised that his original account of how Bilbo acquired the ring in *The Hobbit* was now incompatible with events in the later story. He therefore rewrote parts of Chapter 5 to show that Gollum meant all along to cheat Bilbo and kill him, and that his ring was one of the 'Rings of Power'. This amended version was published in the second edition of *The Hobbit* in 1951, together with an explanatory note by Tolkien to the effect that the revision represented 'the true story . . . as it was eventually revealed (under pressure) by Bilbo to Gandalf'. Item 116 is open to show two pages from the unrevised 1942 Children's Book Club edition, where Gollum has learned 'never, never to cheat at the riddle-game'. In the comparable passage from a revised edition, the *Hobbit* Anniversary edition of 1987, this line has been omitted and Gollum is instead 'a miserable wicked creature' who wants 'something softer' to eat (item 117).

2527 e. 4986, pp.90–1; BOD: X89. E00570, pp.74–5

118–21 *Hobbit* British editions. Various figures have been given for the number of editions and impressions of *The Hobbit* that have been published since 1937. If precise details are conflicting, however, all agree that the number is large. In 1991 it was reported that 100,000 paperback copies were being sold annually, whilst the 1992 centenary print-run of 80,000 copies was sold out before publication. Four British editions are exhibited in Case 11: Penguin Books, Puffin, 1961 (118); Longmans Modern Classics, 1966 (119); Allen & Unwin School Edition, 1972 (120) and Unwin New Edition, 1975 (121). Tolkien was not pleased with the Puffin edition in which there were several misprints and in which 'dwarves' and 'elvish' had been altered to 'dwarfs' and 'elfish' throughout. 'Puffins . . . eat other birds' eggs,' he wrote, 'and are better left to vacated nests' (*Letters*, p.302).

2527 e. 4207; 2527 e. 4742; 25397 e. 301; HarperCollins donation, covers

122 American paperback, 1965. After *The Lord of the Rings* was pirated in America (item 180), Ballantine Books, who were licensed by Houghton Mifflin, published 'authorized editions' of *The Hobbit* and *The Lord of the Rings* (item 181). Unfortunately, however, they printed the text of *The Hobbit* without incorporating Tolkien's revisions or consulting him about the design of the cover. 'I must ask this about the [cover illustration],' Tolkien wrote to Rayner Unwin. 'What has it got to do with the story? Where is this place? Why a lion and emu? And what is the thing in the foreground with pink bulbs?' (*Letters*, p.362).

When Houghton Mifflin replied that their artist had not read the book and that the thing with pink bulbs was 'meant to suggest a Christmas tree', Tolkien responded: 'I begin to feel that I am shut up in a madhouse' (*Biography*, p.228).

25613 e. 19652, cover



124

123–8 Foreign editions. *The Hobbit* has been published in over twenty-five foreign languages since its first appearance in 1937, including editions in Swedish, 1947 (123); Bulgarian, 1975 (124); Hebrew, 1976 (125); French, 1977 (126); Estonian, 1977 (127) and Japanese, 1979 (128).

Given by HarperCollins Publishers, covers

129 Pauline Baynes, 'There and Back Again. A Map of Bilbo's Journey Through Eriador and Rhovanion'. Tolkien was delighted with the illustrations that Pauline Baynes provided for *Farmer Giles of Ham* in 1949 (item 141). She went on to illustrate both *The Adventures of Tom Bombadil* (1962) and *Smith of Wootton Major* (1967). In 1971 she painted the watercolour map 'There and Back Again', from which a poster was made. Its earlier companion-piece for *The Lord of the Rings* is shown as item 179.

MS. Tolkien drawings 101



The Hobbit formed only one element in the busy and creative years at Oxford which preceded the writing of *The Lord of the Rings*. Items 130–46 represent a selection of some of Tolkien's other literary and art-work of the period.

130–1 Two 'Roverandom' watercolours. Tolkien made up many stories to amuse his children in the 1920s and 1930s. They involved characters like Bill Stickers ('Bill stickers will be prosecuted'), Timothy Titus (a Tom Thumb-like man) and Tom Bombadil, Michael's Dutch doll (*Biography*, pp.161–3). 'Roverandom' was a full-length tale composed for John and Michael, based on the adventures of Michael's toy dog which he lost on the beach during a summer holiday in 1925. Tolkien painted two watercolours to accompany the story: the lavish 'The Gardens of the Merking's palace', September 1927 (item 130) and the smaller 'House where "Rover" began his adventures as a "toy"' (item 131).

MS. Tolkien drawings 89, fols.2, 4



132

132 Coiled dragon. Tolkien made a quantity of drawings and watercolours in the course of the decade after 1925, but particularly during the period 1927–8. His 'fascination' with dragons (*Letters*, p.134) had begun in childhood after reading the story of Sigurd and Fafnir in Andrew Lang's *Red Fairy Book*, and dragons featured in his work on several occasions: from his first attempt at writing a story about 'a green great dragon' at the age of seven (*Letters*, p.214), to Farmer Giles's adventures with Chrysophylax. A coiled dragon was the subject of a watercolour painted in September 1927. As a caption Tolkien provided a quotation from *Beowulf* (line 2561): 'hringboga[n] heorte gefysed' ('the heart of the coiling beast was stirred'). Three months after the publication of *The Hobbit*, Tolkien gave a Christmas lecture for children 'On Dragons' at Oxford's University Museum, in which the coiled dragon was used as a lantern-slide.

MS. Tolkien drawings 87, fol.37

133–4 'Childhood bogeys'. Dating from the same fertile period of art-work as the coiled dragon and the 'Roverandom' watercolours, Tolkien drew two imaginary creatures, 'Maddo' (item 133) and 'Owlamoo' (item 134) for Michael, in whose childhood nightmares they figured. 'Maddo' was an armless gloved hand that parted the curtains and crawled down them after dark, whilst 'Owlamoo' was a sinister owl-like figure that perched on high furniture or pictures.

MS. Tolkien drawings 88, fols.31–2

135 'The Nameless Land'. Several of Tolkien's poems were published in anthologies and magazines in the 1920s and 1930s. 'The Nameless Land' appeared in *Realities*, an anthology edited by G.S. Tancred in 1927. It reflects, in thoroughly conventional poetic form, Tolkien's preoccupation with a lost or inaccessible land beyond the sea: 'I dream I see a wayward star, / Than beacon towers in Gondobar / More fair . . .'

2805 f.513, pp.24–5

136 Outerspace. Tolkien was an inveterate doodler, and many of his manuscripts and papers are decorated with drawings and experimental styles of handwriting. On a bifolium outlining a fragmentary plan for an unfinished alliterative poem based on Arthurian legend that he had begun in the 1930s, he drew an intricate pen-and-ink doodle of a comet with the Milky Way in the background.

Tolkien A59/3, fol.219

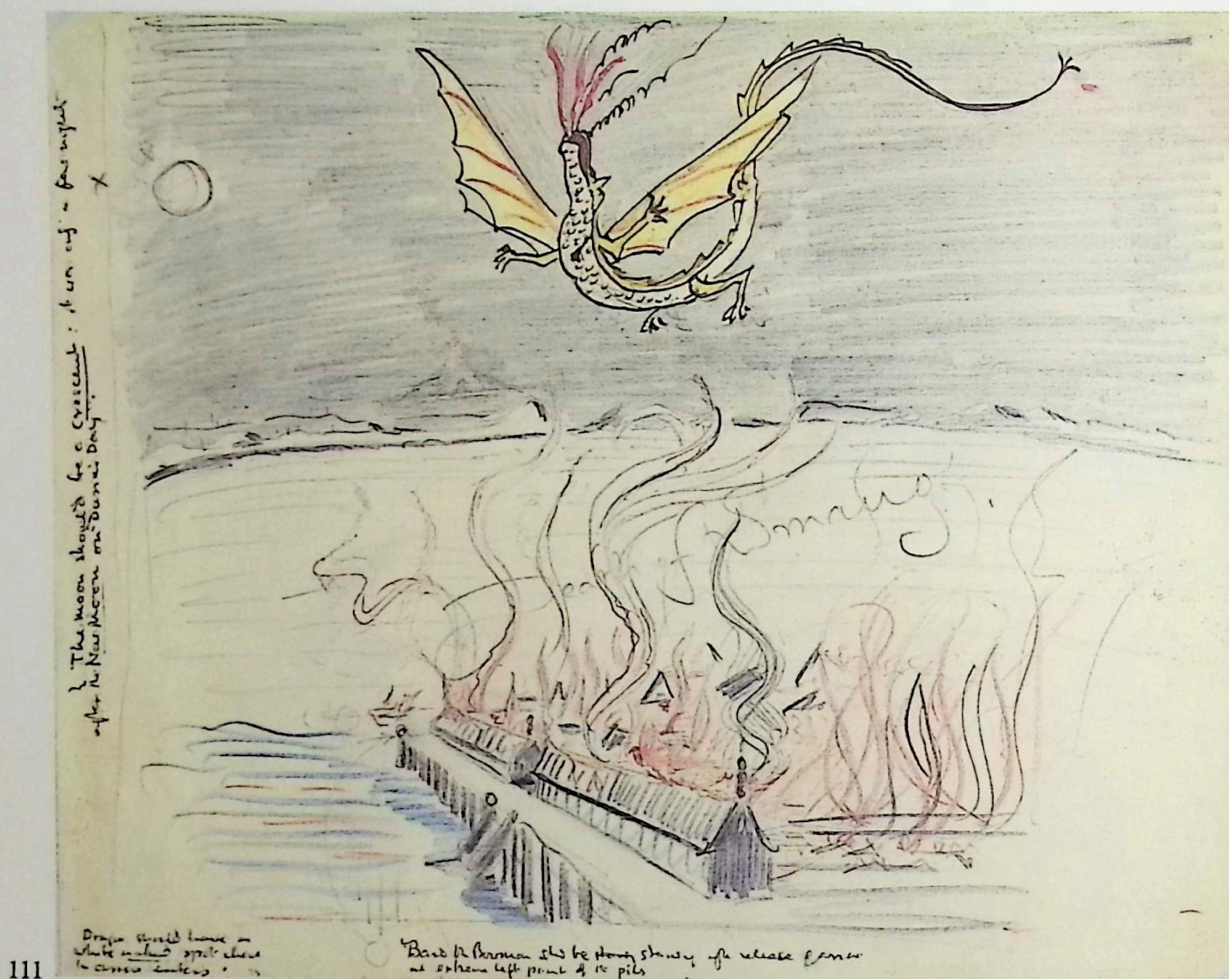
137–8 Death of Father Francis. Tolkien and his guardian had long since made up the differences that had arisen between them over Edith, and the death of 'my beloved Father Francis' (Family papers 2/8) on 11 June 1935 was a great blow to Tolkien, who received formal notification of it from Birmingham Oratory (item 137). He subsequently inherited some of Father Francis's personal effects, including a miniature of the Virgin Mary (item 138) which used to stand on his guardian's mantelpiece at the Oratory.

Family papers 2/8 (1; 2e)

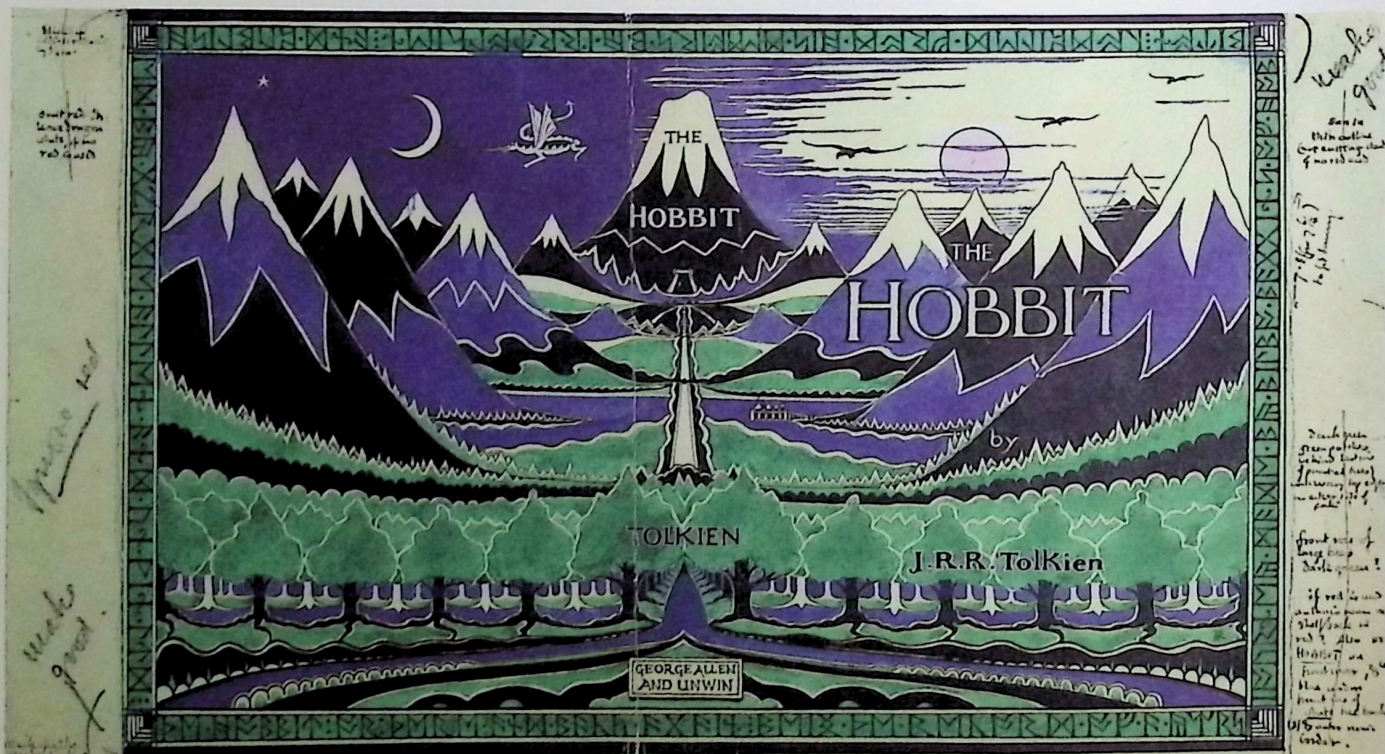
139 'On Fairy Stories'. On 8 March 1939 Tolkien delivered the Andrew Lang Memorial Lecture at St. Andrew's University. Titled 'On Fairy Stories', the lecture argued that the fairy story is 'one of the highest forms of literature' and that the modern connection between children and fairy stories is 'false and accidental' (*Letters*, pp.216, 220). Written at the same time as the early chapters of *The Lord of the Rings*, Tolkien told Aunt Jane Neave in 1961 that the lecture had an 'entirely beneficial' effect on the Ring-story, which was 'a practical demonstration of the views that I expressed [in the lecture]' (*Letters*, p.310). The manuscript exhibited is the first leaf of one of the final drafts of the lecture, which Tolkien subsequently revised and expanded for publication in *Essays Presented to Charles Williams* (1947). It was republished, together with 'Leaf by Niggle' (item 140), in *Tree and Leaf* (1964).

MS. Tolkien 14, fol.123

140 'Leaf by Niggle'. When, in the early 1940s, Tolkien wrote his partly-autobiographical tale of a painter so obsessed with detail that he was unable to complete the canvas he was working on, he was 'dead stuck, somewhere about Ch. 10 (*Voice of Saruman*) in Book III' of *The Lord of the Rings* (*Letters*, p.321). The story expresses something of Tolkien's anxiety that his own 'internal Tree'



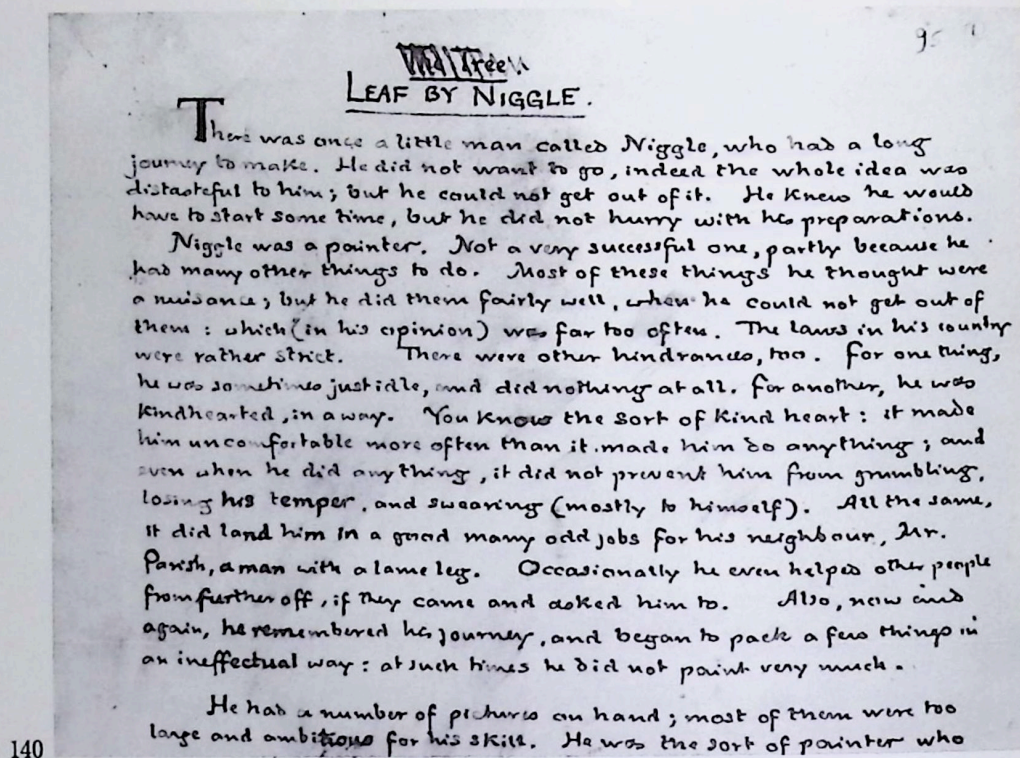
111



99

TOP 'Death of Smaug'
ABOVE *The Hobbit* dust-jacket, 1937





(p.321), *The Lord of the Rings*, would 'be finished in great detail or not at all, and the fear (near certainty) that it would be "not at all"' (p.257). 'Leaf by Niggle' was published in the *Dublin Review* in January 1945. Two months later, Tolkien wrote to Stanley Unwin that it was 'the only thing I have ever done which cost me absolutely no pains at all... It took only a few hours to get down, and then copy out' (*Letters*, p.113). The deleted title in the fair copy of the manuscript exhibited here shows that the story was originally called 'The Tree'. It was republished in *Tree and Leaf* (1964).

MS. Tolkien 6, fol.95

141-6 *Farmer Giles of Ham* (1949). Tolkien's 'lighthearted' (*Letters*, p.42) tale of the unheroic Farmer Giles and Chrysophylax the dragon was originally written in the 1930s and read to Worcester College's Lovelace Society in 1938. However, it was not until he had expanded and revised the story that Allen & Unwin decided to publish it in 1949. Pauline Baynes was contracted to illustrate the book after Tolkien had expressed reservations about Milein Cosman's preliminary designs. When he saw Baynes's drawings, Tolkien wrote enthusiastically to Allen & Unwin: 'They are more than illustrations, they are a collateral theme. I showed them to my friends whose polite comment was that they reduced my text to a commentary on the drawings' (*Letters*, p. 133). The first British edition (item 141) is open to display the title-page and Baynes's frontispiece. Like all of Tolkien's books, *Farmer Giles* has been translated into many foreign languages, including Polish, 1965 (142); Finnish, 1978 (143); Icelandic, 1979 (144) and Malay, 1980 (145). Although the printed book is dedicated to Colonel C.H. Wilkinson, the English Tutor at Worcester who encouraged him to publish it, Tolkien also wrote out an elaborate dedication in Latin (dated 24 August 1950) to his long-time academic collaborator, Simonne d'Ardenne (146).

MS. Tolkien 25, fol.12; 25614 e. 12046; HarperCollins donation, covers.

6 THE LORD OF THE RINGS

Three weeks after the publication of *The Hobbit* Stanley Unwin wrote to Tolkien to warn him that 'a large public' would be 'clamouring next year to hear more from you about Hobbits!' (*Letters*, p.23). Tolkien replied that he was 'a little perturbed. I cannot think of anything more to say about *hobbits* . . . But . . . I will start the process of thought, and try to get some idea of a theme drawn from this material' (p.24). On 19 December 1937 he wrote to Allen & Unwin to acknowledge the receipt of four copies of the second impression of *The Hobbit* which contained the colour illustrations that he had provided for this edition. 'I have', the letter casually concluded, 'written the first chapter of a new story about Hobbits – "A long expected party"' (p.27). So began the long process of creating *The Lord of the Rings*, which was not published until 1954–5. 'It is written in my life-blood', he told Stanley Unwin in 1947, 'such as that is, thick or thin; and I can no other' (p.122).



147 Letter to Charles Furth, 4 February 1938. Tolkien sent the first chapter of 'possible sequel to *The Hobbit*', to Allen & Unwin early in 1938 (*Letters*, frontispiece). The manuscript was written and revised slowly over a period of twelve years between 1937 and 1949. Parts of it were read aloud to C.S. Lewis and the Inklings during the 1940s (item 224), and a typescript was sent in serial form to Christopher Tolkien whilst he was serving in South Africa with the Royal Air Force in 1944–5. It is Christopher to whom Tolkien refers in his letter to Furth when he says that he 'put on my youngest son, lying in bed with a bad heart, to find any more [errata in *The Hobbit*] at twopence a time'. Tolkien later described his son as 'my real primary audience' (*Letters*, p.112), and Christopher not only typed the early books of *The Lord of the Rings* but also redrew Tolkien's original maps for publication (item 176).

2569 d. 948, frontispiece (photogr.)

February 4th. 1938.

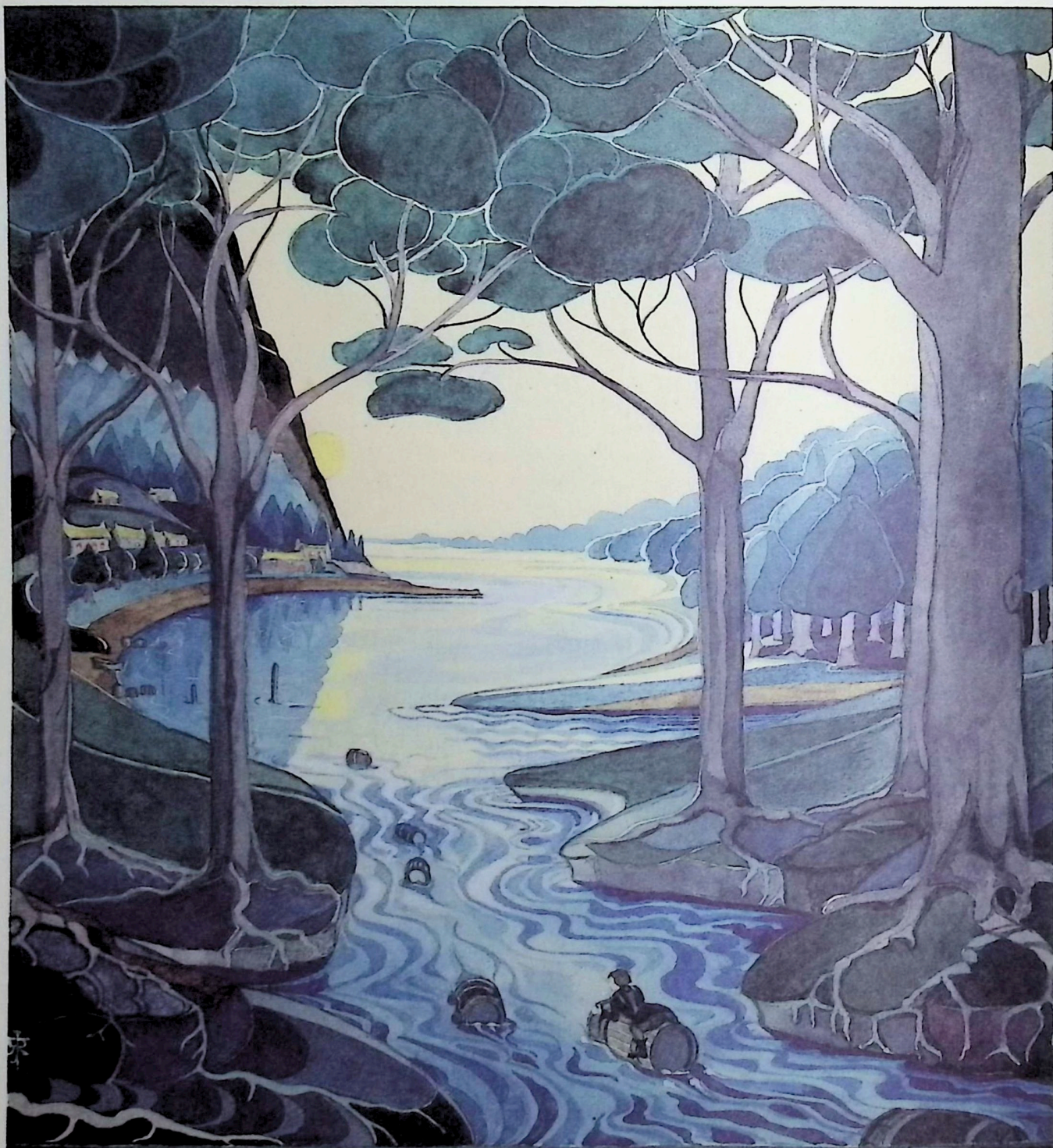
Dear Mr. Furth,

I enclose copy of Chapter I 'A Long-expected Party' of possible sequel to *The Hobbit*.

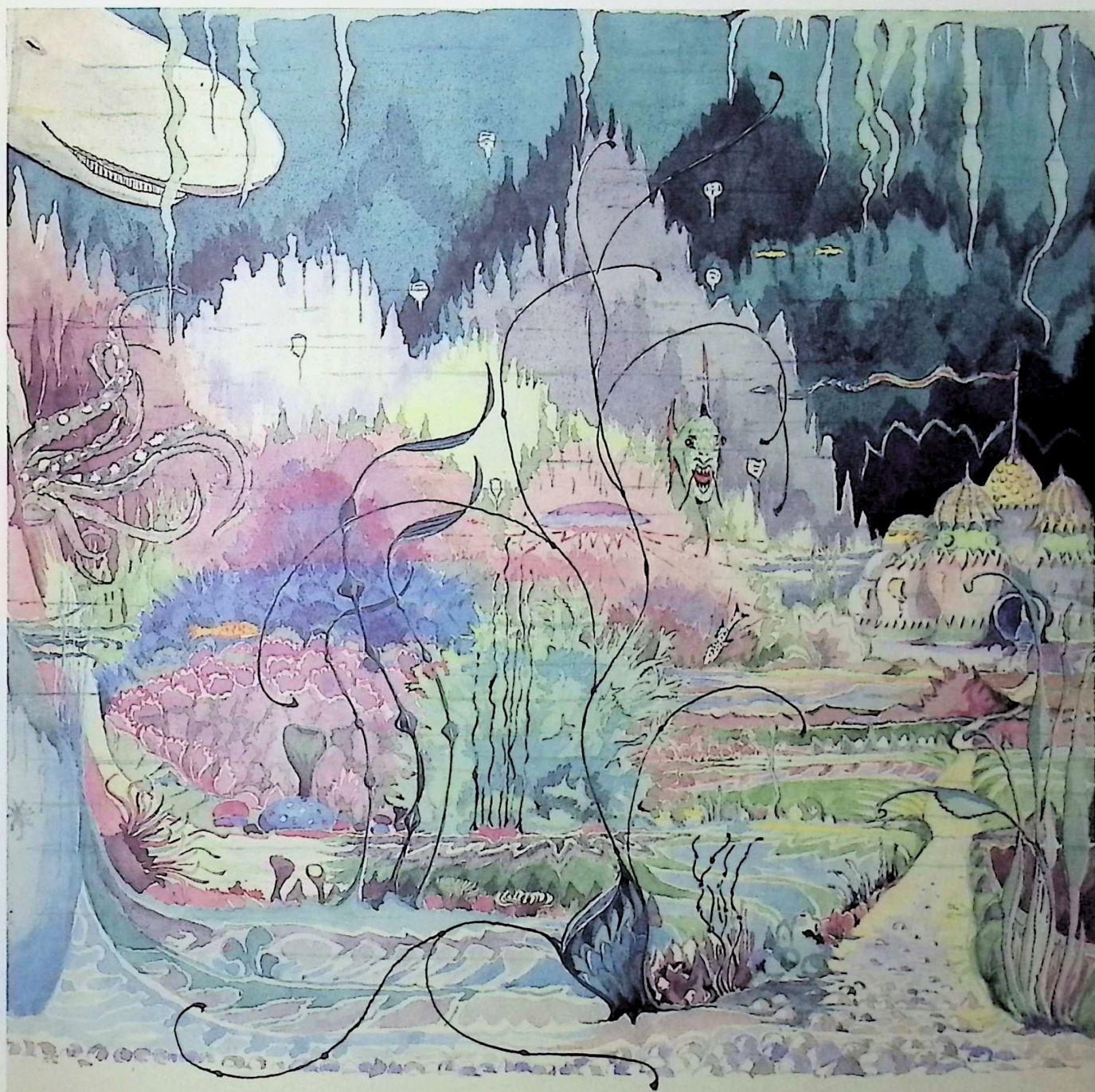
I received safely 4 additional copies of *The Hobbit*.

I received a letter from a young reader in Boston (Lincs) enclosing a list of errata. I then put on my youngest son, lying in bed with a bad heart, to find any more at twopence a time. He did. I enclose the results – which added to those already submitted should (I hope) make an exhaustive list. I also hope they may one day be required.

Yours sincerely
J.R.R. Tolkien.



Bilbo comes to the Huts of the Raft-elves



*The Gardens of Merking's palace
from The Tale of Ramanduin*

148 Manuscript draft. Although Tolkien sold the manuscript of *The Lord of the Rings* to Marquette University in 1957 (item 87) several fragments are preserved amongst his academic working papers, it being Tolkien's custom when writing to use the blank versos of any paper that came to hand. On the back of a typed translation of forty lines from the medieval poem *The Owl and the Nightingale* is a discarded pencil draft of part of 'The Council of Elrond', where Elrond describes the fall of Gil-galad, the victory of the Last Alliance and the growth of Gondor (*The Fellowship of the Ring*, 1st edn., Book II, Chapter 2, p.257). The draft, which displays considerable differences from the published version, begins: 'Fruitless did I say the victory of Gilgalad and Elendil was?' and ends: 'High towers the people built, and strong places, and houses of many shapes, and the wingèd crown of the Kings of Men was held in awe by folk of many tongues'.

Tolkien A9/1, fol.152^v

Kings Reckoning
(Gondor until T.A. 2060)

Yestarë Newyear's Day; I Narvinyë (30), II Nénimë (30),
III Sálimë (30); IV Virevë (30); V Lotevë (30) VI
Nárië (31): Loëndë Midyear's Day; VII Cernië (31),
VIII Úrimë (30), IX Yavannië (30), X Narquelië (30),
XI Hísimë (30), XII Ringarë (30); Mettarë Year's-end
Day.

or... 'L. y. ye' two Enderi / Middle-days.

In every fourth year, except the last of a century
(hamnyë), two Enderi, or Middle-days, were substituted
for Loëndë.

The Sindarin names of the months (used only
by the Dúnedain) were: Narwain, Nínui, Gwaeron,
Gwinth, Lothron, Nórui, Cerveth, Úrui, Ivanneth,
Narbeleth, Hithui, Girithron.

Stewards' Reckoning
(until the end of the
Third Age)

149

149 'Kings Reckoning', Appendix D. The first two volumes of *The Lord of the Rings* were published in 1954, but publication of the third volume was delayed until October 1955 while Tolkien worked on an index of names and the appendices. He abandoned the index in January 1955 but completed the appendices and sent them to the printers on 20 May. After a series of difficulties with the proofs, volume III was published on 20 October. Among Tolkien's working papers for his edition of *Ancrene Wisse* (items 226-7) is a draft of a part of Appendix D, relating to the Númenorean calendars used in Gondor. It differs substantially from the published version.

Tolkien A4/1, fol.188^v

150–65 Original illustrations. According to Tolkien, *The Lord of the Rings* cost Allen & Unwin £4000 to publish (*Letters*, p.247), and although he produced many drawings to accompany it – as he had for *The Hobbit* – illustration was kept to a minimum when the book finally appeared. Sixteen of Tolkien's original drawings are shown in the exhibition: 'Old Man Willow' (150); 'Moria Gate, I' (151); 'The Book of Mazarbul' fragments (152–4); 'Moria Gate, II' (155); 'The Forest of Lothlorien in Spring' (156); 'Helm's Deep & the Hornburg' (157); three sketches of Orthanc (158); 'Orthanc (1)' (159); 'Shelob's Lair' (160); 'Steinborg' (161); 'Dunharrow' (162); Mordor and Rivendell mountains (163); 'Orodruin' (164) and 'Barad-dûr' (165). With the exception of items 159 and 163, all the drawings were published in whole or in part in *Pictures*. Item 159 forms the frontispiece to *The History of Middle-earth* 7, whilst item 163 has not been published.

The three fragments from the 'Book of Mazarbul' (152–4) were initially intended for publication (*Letters*, pp.168, 170). The 'Book', which recorded the history of Balin's people, was found by the Fellowship in the Mines of Moria. 'It had been slashed and stabbed and partly burned, and was so stained with black and other dark marks like old blood that little of it could be read' (*Fellowship*, II, 5, p.335). Using coloured inks and actually setting fire to the edges of the paper, Tolkien produced three facsimile leaves, but the printing processes involved proved too costly and the fragments remained unpublished until they appeared in *The Lord of the Rings Calendar* 1977. 'Moria Gate I' and 'II' (151, 155) were originally drawn on the same sheet of paper, from which Tolkien later cut off 'Moria Gate, II' (*Pictures*, forthcoming new edition).

MSS. Tolkien drawings 71–6, 78–82; 89, fols.12, 15; 90, fols.15, 18; 98, fol.1

166–71 Designs for dust-jackets. Because of the length of Tolkien's manuscript, Allen & Unwin decided that it would have to be published in three volumes priced twenty-one shillings each (*Letters*, pp.164–7). Throughout 1953 Tolkien experimented with various titles for the individual volumes before settling on *The Fellowship of the Ring*, *The Two Towers* and *The Return of the King*. He then produced several drawings for the dust-jackets for each volume, six of which are displayed in this exhibition. Item 166, 'The Fellowship of the Ring', was eventually chosen to provide the basic design for all three volumes. On grey/olive paper, it shows the One Ring surrounded by the fire-letters of its inscription and surmounted by the Red Ring, Narya. Three alternative versions are exhibited as items 167–9, of which Tolkien's own favourite was item 167 (*Letters*, p.186). Painted on black paper with gold and red lettering, it shows the White Ring (Nenya) and the Blue Ring (Vilya) below the One Ring, to the left and right. Item 168 repeats the theme on white paper, as does item 169, where the positions of Nenya and Vilya are reversed.

For the second volume, Tolkien chose the title 'The Two Towers' to cover the 'widely divergent' themes of Books III and IV. '[It] can be left ambiguous', he told Rayner Unwin in August 1953; 'it might refer to Isengard and Barad-dûr, or to Minas Tirith and B; or Isengard and Cirith Ungol' (*Letters*, p.170). In the design shown as item 170, the Towers are the white Minas Morgul and the black, three-horned Orthanc.

Finally, item 171 shows Tolkien's design for 'The Return of the King'. Painted on black paper, the form of the Shadow can just be made out above the symbols of Númenor in the top left-hand corner, reaching out across faint black and red mountains.

MSS. Tolkien drawings 69–70; 90, fols.21, 24, 29–30

171



172–4 Published illustrations. Tolkien was allowed three illustrations in the text of *The Lord of the Rings*, all of which appeared in volume I: the fire-letters written on the ring, I, 2, p.59 (172); the Doors of Durin, II, 4, p.319 (173) and the inscription written on Balin's tomb, *ibid.*, p.333 (174). Tolkien originally wanted the fire-letters to be printed using red ink, but once again it proved too expensive (*Letters*, p.171). He made several versions of each drawing. The ones exhibited are the latest and have been marked-up by the printer.

MS. Tolkien drawings 90, fols.34, 41, 48

175 'Blurb' by C.S. Lewis. When *The Fellowship of the Ring* was published on 29 July 1954, C.S. Lewis reviewed it in glowing terms in *Time & Tide* (14 Aug. 1954). He also contributed a eulogistic blurb for the dust-jacket in which he compared Tolkien to Ariosto, although he warned Tolkien that he should think twice about using it: 'I am certainly a much . . . hated man whose name might do you more harm than good' (*Biography*, p.219). Several reviewers did, in fact, complain that Lewis's support of Tolkien was excessive, although it evidently did not hinder the book's sales. Six weeks after publication, the first edition of three and a half thousand copies had sold out and a reprint was ordered. The full text of the blurb, only part of which was quoted on the dust-jacket, reads:

It would be almost safe to say that no book like this has ever been written. If Ariosto rivalled it in invention (in fact he does not) he would still lack its heroic seriousness. No imaginary world has been projected which is at once so multifarious and so true to its own inner laws; none so seemingly objective, so disinfected from the taint of an author's merely individual psychology; none so relevant to the actual human situation yet so free from allegory. And what fine shading there is in the variations of style to meet the almost endless diversity of scenes and characters – comic, homely, epic, monstrous, or diabolic!

MS. Eng. lett. c. 220/5, fol.77

Magdalen College
Oxford

It would be almost safe to say that no book like this has ever been written. If Ariosto rivalled it in invention (in fact he does not) he would still lack its heroic seriousness. No imaginary world has been projected which is at once so multifarious and so true to its own inner laws; none so seemingly objective, so disinfected from the taint of an author's merely individual psychology; none so relevant to the actual human situation yet so free from allegory. And what fine shading there is in the variations of style to meet the almost endless diversity of scenes and characters – comic, homely, epic, monstrous, or diabolic!



176–8 The first map. Tolkien made various small-scale working maps of Middle-earth as he wrote *The Lord of the Rings*, although when the book was published the endpaper maps had been redrawn by Christopher Tolkien. The first full map (item 176) that Tolkien made represents several stages in the evolution of the geography of the western regions of Middle-earth. A detailed description is provided by Christopher Tolkien in *The History of Middle-earth* 7, pp.295–323, from which the following account is extracted:

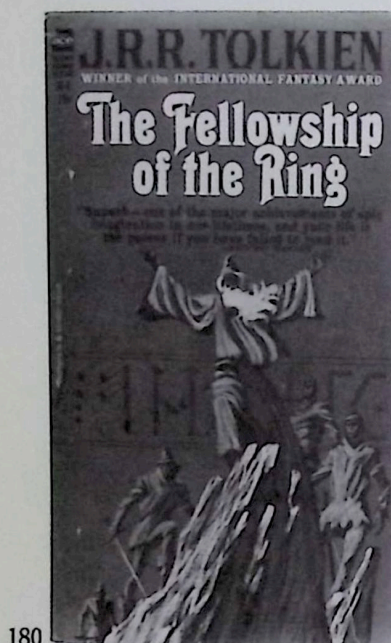
This 'First Map' is a strange, battered, fascinating, extremely complicated and highly characteristic document. To gain understanding of it, its construction must first be described. It consists of a number of pages glued together and on to backing sheets, with a substantial new section of the map glued over an earlier part, and small new sections on top of that. The glue that my father used to stick down the large new portion was strong, and the sheets cannot be separated; moreover through constant folding the paper has cracked and broken apart along the folds, which are distinct from the actual joins of the map-sections. It was thus difficult to work out how the whole was built up; but I am confident that the following account is correct . . .

The original element in the map consisted of two pages glued together along their vertical edges, and is the big rectangle framed in the figure by a black and white line and lettered A. East of the vertical line of squares numbered 22 it extended for a further three lines, but these were left blank. A new section (made up of three portions glued together) extended the original map to North and West . . . This section is marked B on the figure and framed in double lines . . . A third section, marked C on the figure and framed in double lines . . . was superimposed on a part of the original map 'A', obliterating almost all of its southern half . . . The small rectangle lettered D on the figure and framed in dots was replaced over and over again, and is by far the most complex part of the map, as the region covered is also crucial in the story: from the Gap of Rohan and Isengard to Rauros and the mouths of Entwash.

A diagram of sections A–D is given in *HMe* 7, p.297 (item 178). Four small original fragments associated with the complex area D also accompany the map (item 177).

179 Pauline Baynes, 'A Map of Middle-earth', 1969. In 1969 and 1971, Pauline Baynes designed for publication as posters a pair of decorative maps illustrating *The Lord of the Rings* and *The Hobbit* (item 129). Tolkien's popularity increased enormously after the appearance of American editions of *The Lord of the Rings* in 1965 (items 180–1) and the British second edition in 1966, and Baynes's posters were themselves best-sellers in the 1970s.

MS. Tolkien drawings 100



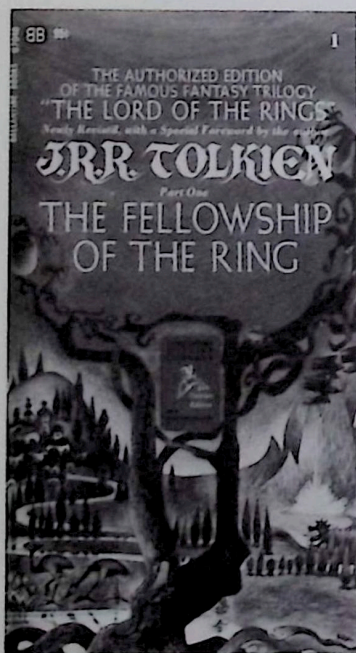
180

180–2 American editions. Despite its price, *The Lord of the Rings* was reprinted annually between 1954 and 1966. It numbered among its admirers the poet W.H. Auden, who declared in a 1955 radio broadcast: 'If someone dislikes it, I shall never trust their literary judgement about anything again' (*Letters*, p.229). Detractors included the critic Edwin Muir, who wrote in the *Observer*: 'All the characters are boys masquerading as adult heroes . . . hardly one of them knows anything about women . . . [They] will never come to puberty' (*Biography*, p.223). Tolkien himself made up a perceptive comic rhyme about the conflicting opinions that his work attracted:

The Lord of the Rings
is one of those things:
if you like it you do:
if you don't, then you boo!
(*Biography*, p.223)

In June 1965 an American company, Ace Books, published an unauthorized three-volume paperback edition of *The Lord of the Rings* (item 180) which immediately became a cult on American university campuses, selling 100,000 copies by the end of the year. The authorized paperback (item 181) was published in three volumes by Ballantine Books in October 1965, using a cover design based on the earlier *Hobbit* paperback of which Tolkien disapproved (item 122). Within a few months this edition had sold a million copies and established Tolkien as an internationally best-selling author. As a barbed tribute to his fame, in 1969 *Harvard Lampoon* published a book-length parody, *Bored of the Rings*, in which even the cover of the Ballantine edition was mocked (item 182).

Given by HarperCollins Publishers, covers



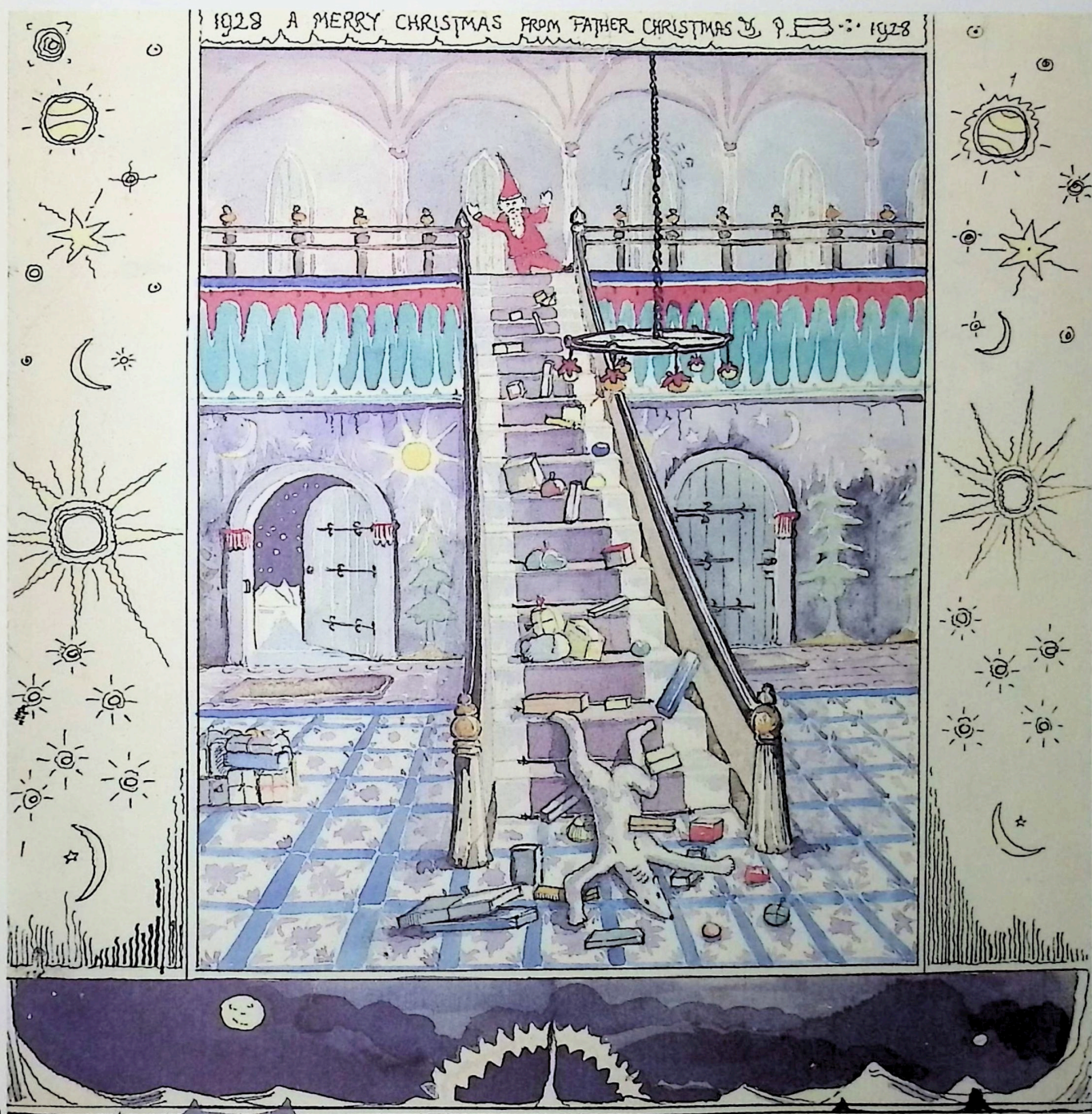
181

183–90 Foreign editions. *The Lord of the Rings* has been published in over twenty languages since the appearance of the first translation, into Dutch, in 1956. In December 1991, 20 million copies were reported to have been sold world-wide. In Case 18 are editions written in Polish, 1962 (183); Swedish, 1967 (184); German, 1977 (185); French, 1977 (186); Japanese, 1977 (187); Hebrew, 1979 (188); Hungarian, 1981 (189) and Danish, 1990 (190). The Danish edition, originally published in 1977, was illustrated by Queen Margrethe II of Denmark.

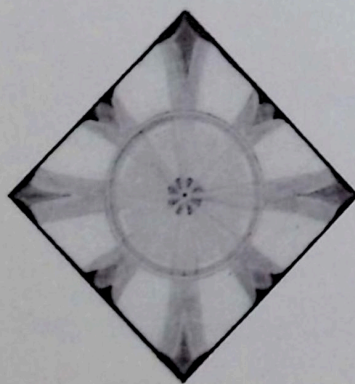
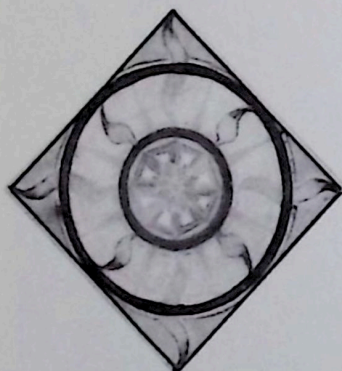
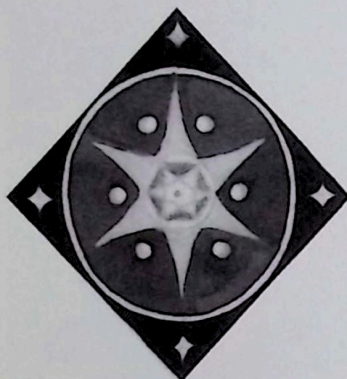
Given by HarperCollins Publishers, covers

191 Centenary edition. Editions of *The Hobbit*, *The Lord of the Rings* and *The Silmarillion*, illustrated by Alan Lee, were published in 1991 to mark the centenary of Tolkien's birth the following year. The one-volume hardback edition of *The Lord of the Rings* displayed in the exhibition contains fifty colour plates commissioned from Lee for the centenary. The dust-jacket shows Frodo, Sam and Gollum hiding outside Sauron's fortress in a scene from *The Two Towers*, 'The Black Gate is Closed'.

BOD: M91. D.02138, cover



7 THE SILMARILLION



'The *Silmarillion*' . . . has bubbled up, infiltrated everything which I have tried to write', Tolkien told Stanley Unwin in 1950 (*Letters*, p.136), and during the course of his literary career he was at pains to emphasize that both *The Hobbit* and *The Lord of the Rings* were only elements of a much larger tale, without which they could not properly be understood. In a letter to his publishers shortly after he had finished *The Lord of the Rings* in 1949, he said: '*The Silmarillion* . . . has captured *The Lord of the Rings*, so that it has become simply its continuation and completion, requiring the *Silmarillion* to be fully intelligible' (*Letters*, pp.136-7). Indeed, one of the reasons why there was a six-year delay before *The Lord of the Rings* appeared in print was that Tolkien was unwilling to publish it without *The Silmarillion*, whilst Allen & Unwin believed that the two works could be read independently of each other.

In fact, the successive manuscripts that Tolkien called 'The *Silmarillion*' were themselves part of the wider mythmaking activity that he had been engaged in since his undergraduate days, when he began to develop the language 'Quenya' (item 34) and to retell the story of Kullervo (item 45). '[I] set myself a task,' he wrote in 1956, 'the arrogance of which I fully recognized and trembled at: being precisely to restore to the English an epic tradition and present them with a mythology of their own' (*Letters*, pp.230-1). The creation of a complete and self-sustaining legendarium occupied him for most of his life, from the first stories written in the winter of 1916-17 to the designs for artefacts for his 'imaginary world' (*Letters*, p.215), executed shortly before his death.



192 'The Fall of Gondolin', the 'Tuor B' manuscript. Tolkien described the story of Tuor and the fall of Gondolin as: 'the first real story of this imaginary world . . . written in prose during sick-leave at the end of 1916' (*Letters*, p.215). It was the beginning of a series of tales in which he began to elaborate the history of Valinor and Middle-earth. At this stage the various strands of the legend were grouped together under the title *The Book of Lost Tales*, in which a traveller, Eriol, crosses the sea to the island where the Elves live and hears their history from their own lips. The version of 'The Fall of Gondolin' known as the 'Tuor B' manuscript is titled: 'Tuor and the Exiles of Gondolin (which bringeth in the great tale of Earendel)'. It was copied out by Edith and amended by Tolkien, probably during the period 1919-20 when he was working on the *New English Dictionary* (*HMe* 1, pp.5-11; 2, pp.146-7).

Tolkien S1/10, fols.ii^v-1

193 Exeter Essay Club. 'I had the cheek', Tolkien recalled in 1955, 'to read ["The Fall of Gondolin"] to the Exeter College Essay Club' (*Letters*, p.215). The Club's minute-books are preserved in Exeter's archives and a description of Tolkien's reading is entered under the minutes of the 143rd meeting on Wednesday 10 March 1920 (where his name is also misspelt):

As a discovery of a new mythological background Mr. Tolkein's matter was exceedingly illuminating and marked him out as a staunch follower of tradition, a treatment indeed in the manner of such typical Romantics as William Morris, George Macdonald, de la Motte Fouquet [*sic*] . . . The battle of the contending forces of good and evil as represented by the Gongothlin [*sic*] and the followers of Melco [*sic*] was very graphically and astonishingly told, combined with a wealth of attendance to detail interesting in extreme.

In the audience were Nevill Coghill and Hugo Dyson.

Lent by Exeter College



194–6 Beren and Lúthien. The story of the mortal man, Beren, who loved the immortal elven-woman, Lúthien Tinúviel, became central to the 'Silmarillion'-mythology. Tolkien wrote the first version of the tale in 1917 when he was stationed in Yorkshire after the birth of his son, John. The story tells of the lovers' quest to cut a Silmaril from the Iron Crown of Morgoth, and it originally formed part of *The Book of Lost Tales* (HMe 2, pp.3–68). However, between 1925 and 1931, Tolkien also worked on a poetic version of the story, 'The Lay of Leithian', written in octosyllabic couplets (HMe 3, pp.150–329). C.S. Lewis read this version in 1929 and wrote (item 194) to Tolkien on 7 December:

I can quite honestly say that it is ages since I have had an evening of such delight . . . The two things that come out clearly are the sense of reality in the background and the mythical value: the essence of a myth being that it should have no taint of allegory to the maker and yet should *suggest* incipient allegories to the reader.

Lewis also sent Tolkien fourteen pages of detailed criticism which Tolkien incorporated into the poem before abandoning it in the autumn of 1931. 'The Lay' was never completed, although Tolkien began revising it in 1949–50 after finishing *The Lord of the Rings* (HMe 3, pp.330–63). The title-page and the first page of the manuscript from this revision are exhibited as items 195–6.

After Edith's death, Tolkien wrote: 'She was (and knew she was) my Lúthien' (*Letters*, p.420). The tombstone on their joint grave in Wolvercote cemetery reads: 'Edith Mary Tolkien, Lúthien, 1889–1971. John Ronald Reuel Tolkien, Beren, 1892–1973'.

Tolkien S4/1, fol.1; S4/4, fols.1–2

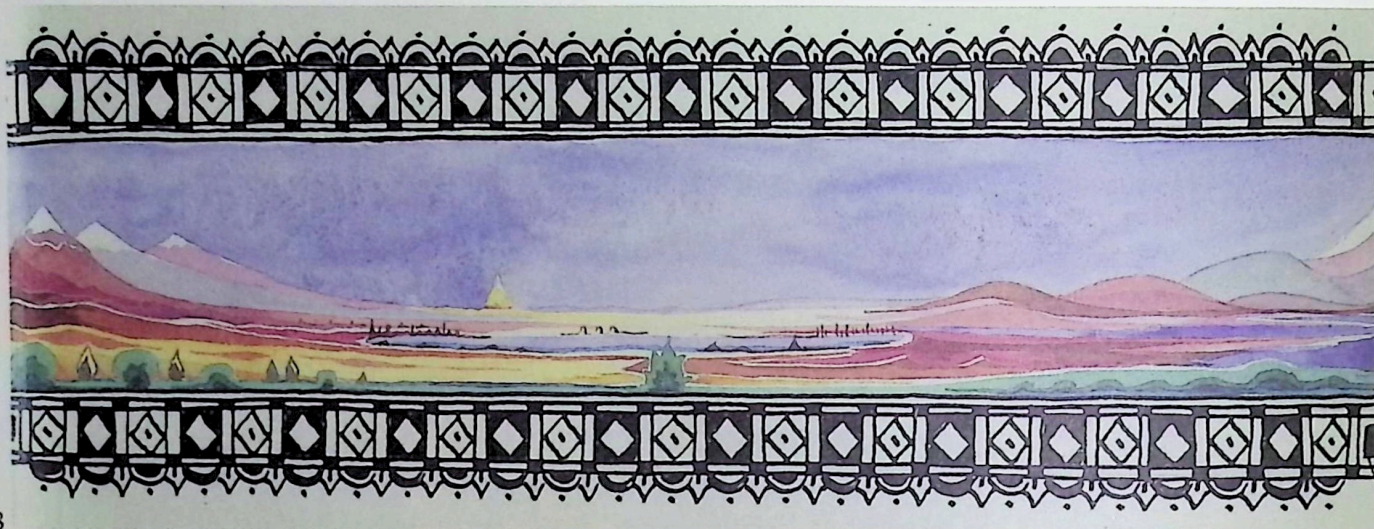
197

Sketch of the mythology with especial reference to the Children of Húrin.

After the departure of the Nine Valar for the governance of the world Morgoth (Demon of Dark) rebels against the overlordship of Manwë, overthrusts the lamps set up to illumine the world, and flounds the isle where the Valar (or Gods) dwell. He fortifies a palace of dungeons in the North. The Valar remove to the uttermost West where they establish the land of Valinor. . . .

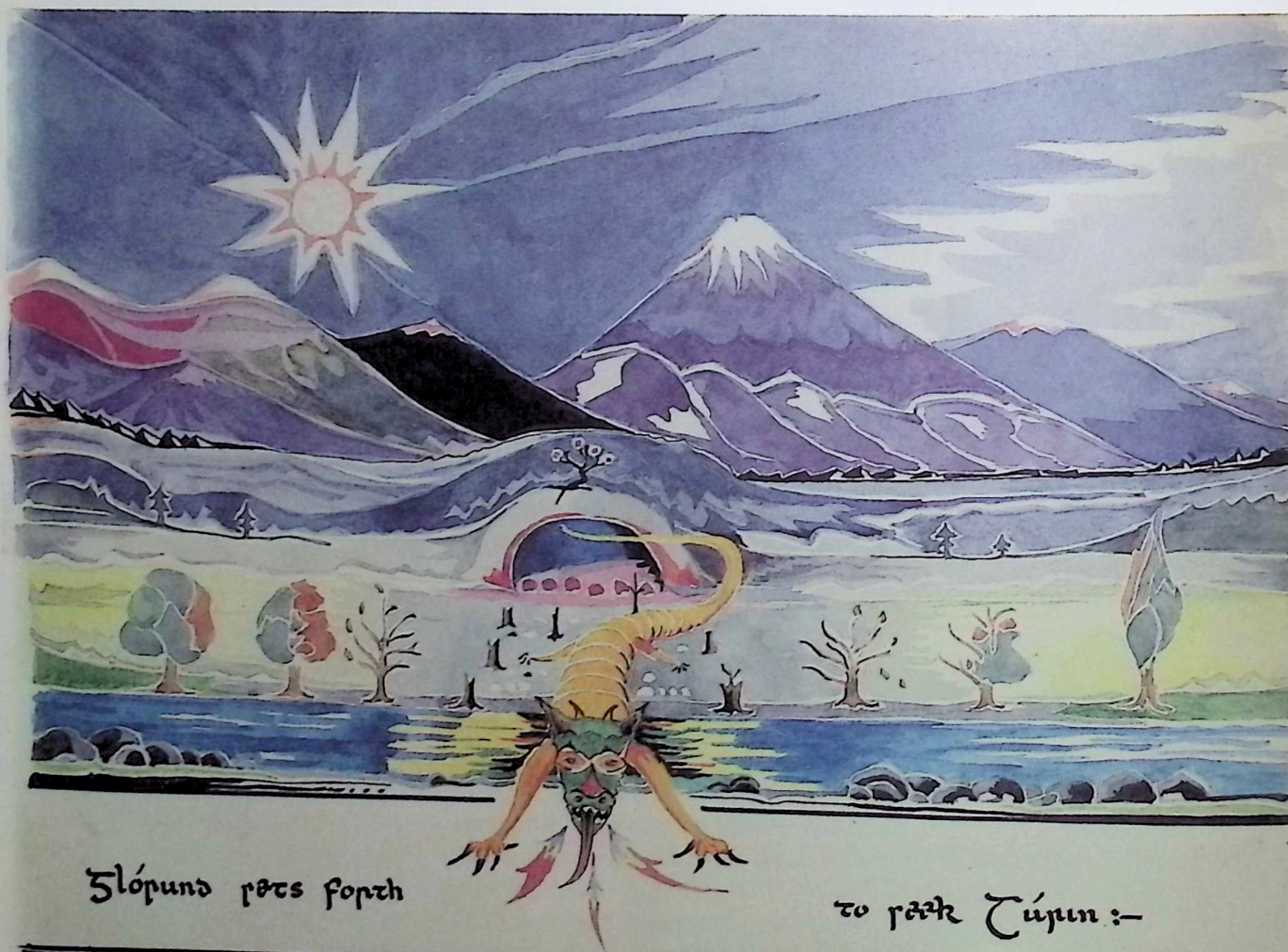
197–8 The earliest 'Silmarillion'. 'The Lay of Leithian' was only one of two long poems relating to his imaginary world, but not incorporated into *The Book of Lost Tales*, that Tolkien wrote in the 1920s. The other was the alliterative 'The Lay of the Children of Húrin', which told the story of Túrin and the dragon (HMe 3, pp.3–130). Tolkien showed this poem to Dickie Reynolds, his former teacher, who asked him to explain its background. In response, Tolkien wrote a prose summary of the mythology as it existed to date, in 1926 (HMe 4, pp.11–75). This 'Sketch' forms the first manuscript of 'The Silmarillion' proper, in which Tolkien abandoned the stories-within-a-story device of *The Book of Lost Tales*. It represents what Christopher Tolkien called 'a new starting-point in the history of "The Silmarillion"' (HMe 4, p.11), and it was from here that the prose forms of the legendarium developed, rather than from *The Book of Lost Tales*. Two manuscripts are exhibited: (item 197) the first page of the 'Sketch of the mythology with especial reference to the "Children of Húrin"' and (item 198) the first 'Silmarillion' map, drawn on a sheet of Leeds University examination paper (HMe 4, pp.219–34).

Tolkien S2/1, fol.1; S2/10, fol.3



208

'Mithrim', 1927



Gló Gund sets forth

to seek Túrin :-

207

'Gló Gund sets forth', 1927

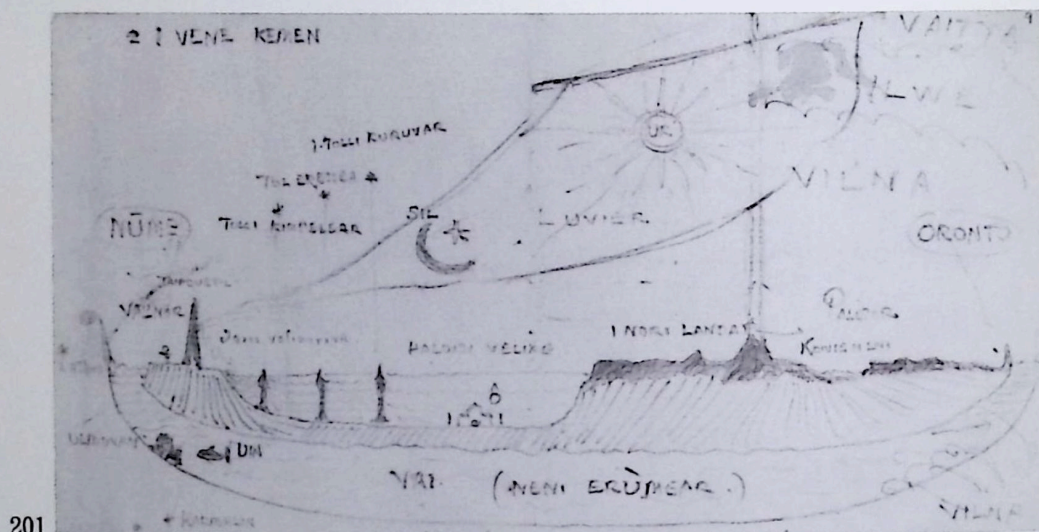


151

'Moria' (West Gate)

199–201 'The Shape of the World'. Tolkien intended his mythology to be all-embracing and from its earliest period of composition had provided the 'Silmarillion' with its own Creation myths. The three manuscripts exhibited relate to the cosmology of the world after its creation by Ilúvatar. 'The Ambarkanta', or 'Of the Fashion of the World' (item 199) describes a 'globed' earth surrounded by 'Vaiya, the Enfolding Ocean' and the 'Ilurambar, or Walls of the World'. Item 200, 'Ilú. The World: from Númen (West) to Rómen (East)', is one of several sketches Tolkien made to accompany 'The Ambarkanta' in the early 1930s (*HMe* 4, pp.235–61). An earlier version of the world seen in section, dating from the period of *The Book of Lost Tales* (*HMe* 1, pp.83–4), is shown as item 201. In it the world is depicted as a Viking ship, with the sun and the moon borne on a huge sail that is fastened at its western extremity to Taniquetil, the Mountain of the World, in Valinor.

Tolkien S2/3, fols.2, 3^v, 9



201

202 'The Lost Road'. Much of the 'Silmarillion'-mythology is concerned with the wars of the Elves against Morgoth and their attempts to recover the three jewels, the Silmarilli. A decisive and cataclysmic event in these stories is the Atlantis-like destruction of Númenor or Westernesse, the island given to Men who had helped the Elves in their wars. When its inhabitants are tempted by Morgoth's lieutenant, Sauron, to sail West to the divine lands, Númenor is overwhelmed by the sea and the Second Age inaugurated.

When C.S. Lewis suggested to Tolkien in the 1930s that as there was 'too little of what we really like in stories' (*Biography*, p.170) they ought to write some themselves, Tolkien began 'The Lost Road', whilst Lewis wrote the first book of his science-fiction trilogy, *Out of the Silent Planet*. 'The Lost Road' tells how a modern-day father and son become involved, through time travel, in the downfall of Númenor. The manuscript breaks off after four chapters and Tolkien did not complete it (*HMe* 5, pp.7-10, 36-104). The opening of Chapter 1, 'A step forward. Young Alboin', is exhibited here.

Tolkien A60/1, fol.47

203-4 'Quenta Silmarillion'. Tolkien made three extant versions of the main matter of 'The Silmarillion': the 'Sketch' (item 197); 'The Quenta', a compendium or 'brief History of the Noldoli' (written c.1930 and not exhibited here; *HMe* 4, pp.76-218), and the 'Quenta Silmarillion', which he sent to Stanley Unwin after

QUENTA. Silmarillion

Here begins the Silmarillion or history of the Silmarils.

Of the Valar.

¶ 1.

For Ilúvatar made visible the song of the Ainur, and they beheld it as a light in the darkness.

and of his history which they saw beginning and unfolding as in a Vision. Therefore Ilúvatar gave to the Vision Being and set it amid the Void, and the secret fire he sent to burn at the heart of the World. Then those of the Ainur who would entered into the World at the beginning of the time, and beheld it.

Thus Men began to achieve it, and by their labours to fulfil the Vision which they had seen. Long they laboured in the region of Aman, but the vastness of the thought of Elves and Men, until in the time appointed was made free the Kingdom of Earth. Then they fulfilled the Vision of the World, and descended into it, and built thereon, and are there.

Eru

In the beginning (the All-father) who in Elvish tongue is named Ilúvatar made the Ainur of his thought, and they made great music before him. And of this music the World was made; for Ilúvatar gave it being, and set it amid the Void, and the secret fire he set to burn at the heart of the World; and he showed the World to the Ainur. And many of the mightiest of them became enamoured of its beauty, and desired to enter into it; and they put on the raiment of the World, and descended into it, and they are in it.

These spirits the Elves named the Valar, which is the Powers, and men have often called them gods. Many lesser spirits of their own kind they brought in their train, both great and small; and some of these men have confused with the Elves, but wrongly, for they were before the World, but Elves and Men awoke first in the World, after the coming of the Valar. Yet in the making of Elves and Men, and in the giving to each of their especial gifts, Ilúvatar alone was author; wherefore they are called the children of Ilúvatar.

The chieftains of the Valar were nine. These were the names of the Nine Gods in the Elvish tongue as it was spoken in Valinor, though they have other or altered names in the speech of the Gnomes, and their names among men are manifold: Manwë and Melkor Ulmo, Aule, Mandos, Lórien, Tulkas, Ossë, Öromë.

204

the publication of *The Hobbit* in 1937 (*Letters*, p.25). This became Tolkien's main working manuscript and was heavily revised, for the most part after the completion of *The Lord of the Rings*, although some amendments were made earlier (*HME* 5, pp.199-338). In the course of revision Tolkien drafted several title-pages, including (item 203): 'I Eldanyäre. | The history of the Elves | or Silmarillion'. A manuscript page of the opening lines with interlineal and marginal revisions is shown as item 204.

Tolkien S5/1, fol.10; S5/2, fol.3

205-6 *The Silmarillion* (1977). When Tolkien died in 1973, the 'Silmarillion'-mythology was still incomplete and he left behind no single, coherent manuscript suitable for publication. It fell to Christopher Tolkien to edit the various documents, 'to work out a single text, selecting and arranging in such a way as



"That's that!" said Sam. (What we expected. But I don't like it.)
 Suppose we've got exactly where he wanted to bring us. Well, let's get
 moving away as quick as we can. He has headed us wrong. That's
 what he's after. He's waiting for us to get into the tunnel. It's pure
 wickedness of some sort. And what sort will it be?

Like enough, said Frodo. But we could not have got even so far
 without him. So if we ever manage our escape, then Gollum and all his
 wickedness will be part of the plan.

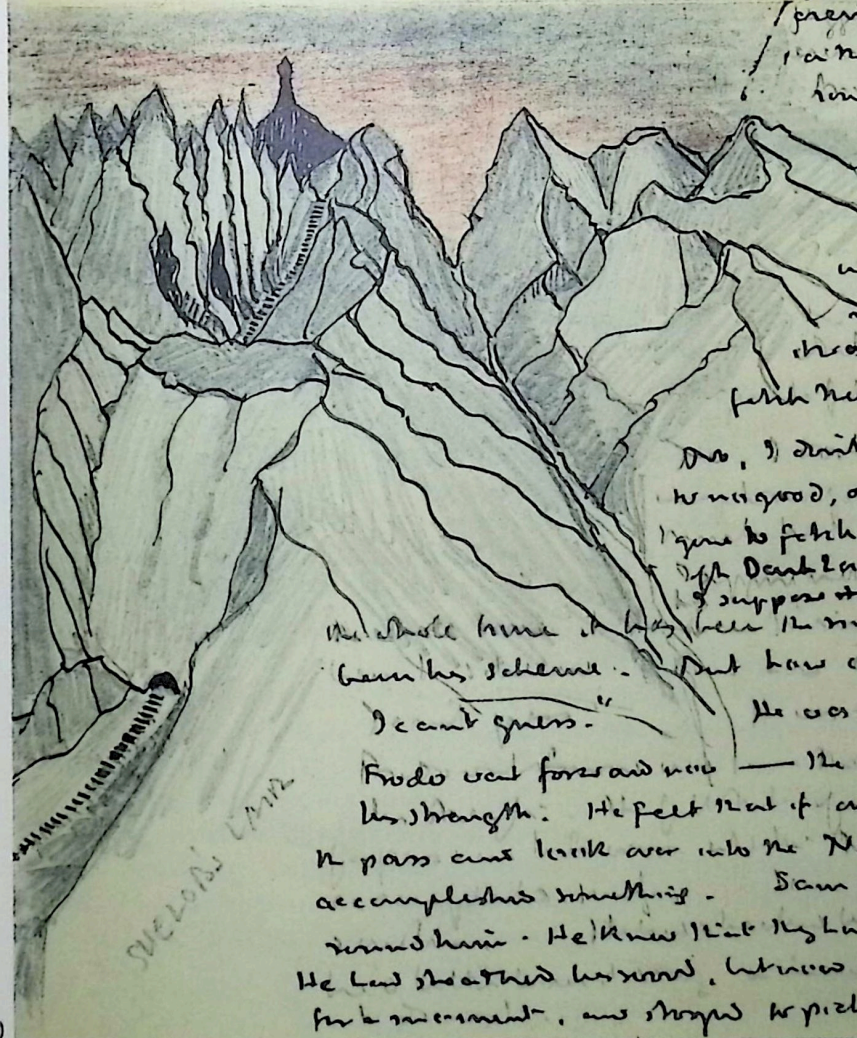
So far you say, said Sam. This far? Where are we now?
 I don't know, said Frodo. The main range of the Misty Mountains.
 Look! The road splits into two: it turns up, but no longer steeply.
 Beyond and ahead there was an ominous glare in the sky, and like a
 great notch in the mountain wall a cleft was cut down against it.
 So Frodo and Sam went on. On their right the vale of white fell away and broad
 ordered hills it had no break. Loosely some Frodo saw with his own
 darkness of great ravine that was the head of the great Dale. Dark in
 depths of the forest glimmered the white head that led down the great pass to the
 On their left sharp jagged pinnacles stood up like houses carved by the
 billions, and between them were dark
 crevices and clefts. But on the
 left side of the cleft there
 was a small black
 hole, and that was the door to
 the light.

I don't like the look of
 that, said Sam. It's
 upper pass, I guessed too. O' you
 remember he would say if
 there or no. O' you think he's gone to
 fetch him — or is something?

No, I don't think so, said Frodo. He's up
 to no good, of course, but I don't think he's
 gone to fetch Gollum. It's no more
 of the Dark Lord. I suppose not, said Sam. No
 I suppose not.

The whole time it has been the way for poor Sam to come. That's
 been his scheme. But how coming up here will help him.
 I can't guess. He was now to learn.

Frodo went forward now — the last step — and he exerted all
 his strength. He felt that if ever he could get to the saddle of
 the pass and look over into the Dimmery Land he would have
 accomplished something. Sam followed. He seemed still all
 round him. He knew that his hand walked into some hole, but what?
 He had stretched his hand, but now he drew it in readiness. He held
 for a moment, and stopped to pick up his staff with his left hand

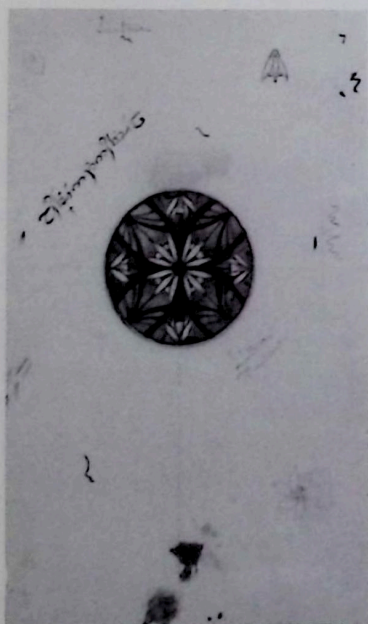


seemed to me to produce the most coherent and internally self-consistent narrative' (quoted in *HMe* 1, p.6). The result was *The Silmarillion*, published in 1977. Tolkien feared that the 'heigh stile' (*Letters*, p.238) of his mythology would not appeal to readers of *The Hobbit* and *The Lord of the Rings*, but despite his misgivings *The Silmarillion* proved popular enough to generate sales of 100,000 copies annually by 1991. Shown as item 205 is the first British Book Club Associates edition of *The Silmarillion*, together with (item 206) the first American edition, both published in 1977.

Given by HarperCollins Publishers, covers

207–14 Eight illustrations. Just as he produced paintings and drawings to accompany *The Hobbit* and *The Lord of the Rings*, so Tolkien made many illustrations for the 'Silmarillion'-mythology, including those exhibited here, all of which (except for items 211 and 213) date from the intensely productive period 1927–8: 'Glórund sets forth to seek Túrin', September 1927 (207); 'Mithrim', 1927 (208); 'Halls of Manwe on the Mountains of the World above Faerie', July 1928 (209); 'Fangorn Forest', c.1928 (210); flowering tree, undated (211); flowering tree with bird, 1928 (212); Elvish flowers, c.1960 (213) and designs for friezes, c.1928 (214). Despite its title, 'Fangorn Forest' (210) does illustrate a scene from *The Silmarillion* rather than *The Lord of the Rings*. Tolkien captioned the painting himself for the 1974 *J.R.R. Tolkien Calendar*, where it supposedly illustrates Pippin and Merry lost in the forest before their meeting with Treebeard (*The Two Towers*, Book III, Chapter 4). In fact, the two small figures at the roots of the trees are the Elves Beleg and Gwindor, and the watercolour was made at the same time as the other 'Silmarillion' pictures. Tolkien also redrew it in black and white for one of *The Hobbit* illustrations, 'Mirkwood', in 1937 (items 89–97; see *Pictures*, no.37).

MSS. Tolkien drawings 87, fols.33–4, 52, 54; 88, fol.1; 89, fols.13–14; 93, fol.47



217

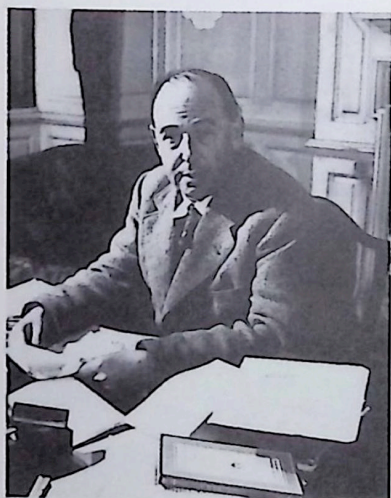
215–23 Last drawings and designs. In the years after the publication of *The Lord of the Rings* when Tolkien was intermittently revising the 'Quenta Silmarillion' manuscript, he also produced a series of drawings and designs which demonstrate how thoroughgoing and complete his conception of his imaginary world was. Not only did he create an entire cosmology and history, but also languages, a geography, flora and fauna, a system of heraldry, and even decorative tiles and textiles. From this last period date a crayon sketch, 'The Hills of the Morning', November 1961 (215); two heraldic devices for Lúthien, both depicting the white flowers of niphredil, c.1960–1 (216–17); a drawing of an inlaid heraldic plaque bearing the emblem of Idril Celebrindal, and annotated by Tolkien: 'preserved from Gondolin & descending from Earendel to Númenor, whence it was saved by Elendil & taken to Gondor', 14 December 1960 (218); a design for a Númenorean tile based on Idril's cornflower device, with a note by Tolkien: 'Númenorean tile . . . preserved in Gondor', 10–13 December 1960 (219); a design for a Númenorean textile, 4–7 December 1960 (220); a floral alphabet, November 1960 (221), and finally (222–3) a Númenorean ceramic and some flowering rushes, which are two of several hundred similar doodles that Tolkien made in newspapers during the 1960s whilst completing the crossword. With the exception of items 215 and 221–3, all the drawings are reproduced in *Pictures*.

MSS. Tolkien drawings 91, fols.7, 9, 11, 14, 17, 24, 37; 94, fols.12–13

8 ACADEMIC LIFE

'The devotion to "learning", as such and without reference to one's own repute, is a high and even in a sense spiritual vocation', Tolkien wrote in 1963 (*Letters*, p.337). Inevitably his career as a best-selling author has overshadowed his achievements as a teacher and scholar, which were themselves sufficiently remarkable. Rawlinson and Bosworth Professor at Oxford at the age of only thirty-four, he was a popular and celebrated academic figure long before the success of *The Hobbit* and his later writing. His work on Middle English texts and philology was of great importance in the development of these areas of study, whilst his dramatic reading of the opening of *Beowulf* (item 229) has passed into Oxford folklore among generations of undergraduates.

Yet if his academic career is significant in its own right, it is also central to our understanding of Tolkien, for the analytic and speculative philological activities involved in his profession (such as the chart of vowel-changes shown as item 225 below) also led him to create a world in which 'a common greeting would be *elen síla lúmenn' omentielmo* [a star shines on the hour of our meeting]' (*Letters*, p.265). 'There were not two Tolkiens, one an academic and the other a writer' (*Biography*, p.131), but the same mind and imagination that engaged in the production of scholarly editions of early English manuscripts also created *The Hobbit*, *The Lord of the Rings* and *The Silmarillion*. 'He had been inside language', as C.S. Lewis wrote of him (*Biography*, p.134), and Tolkien's career as a teacher and scholar cannot be separated from his life as a writer.

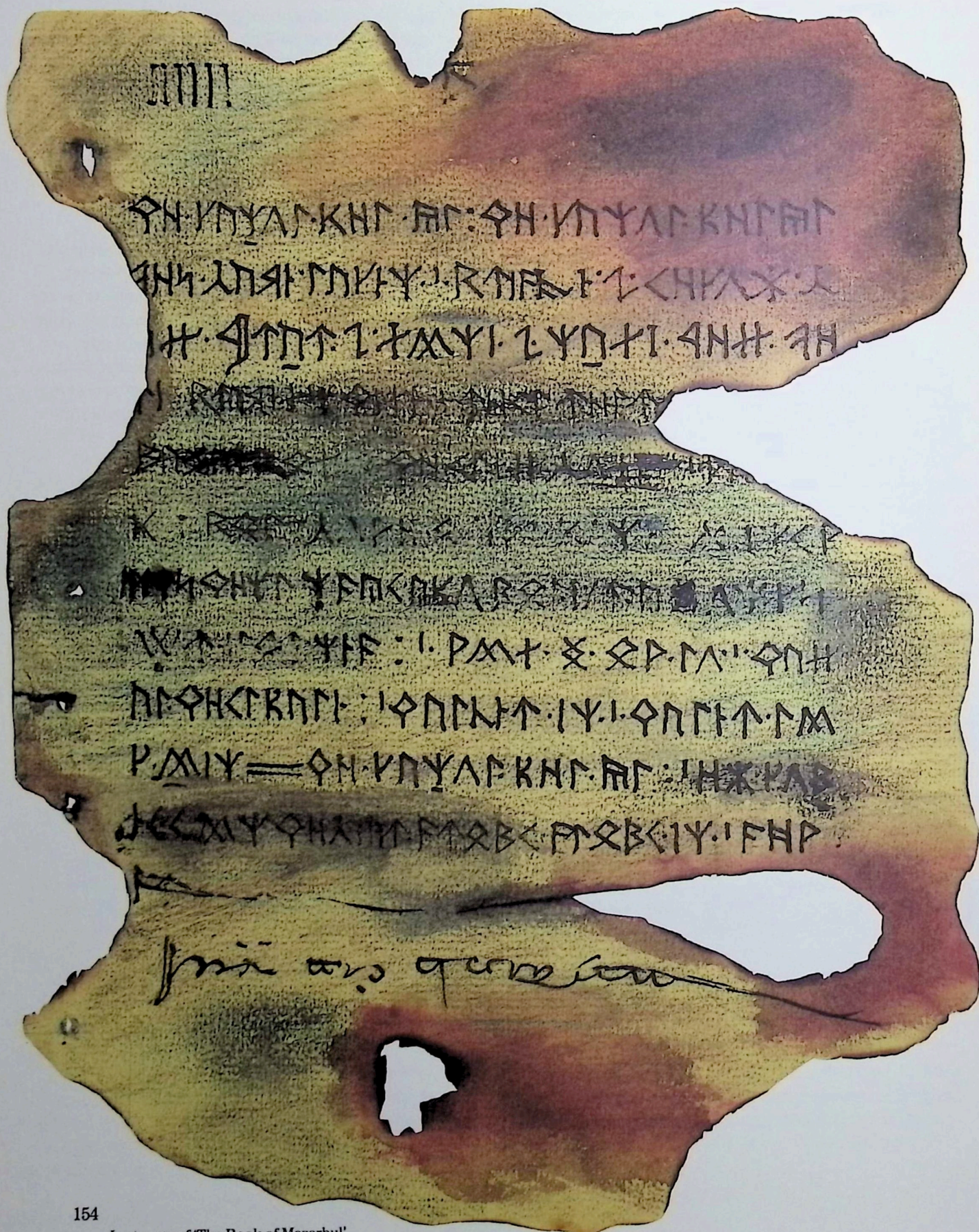


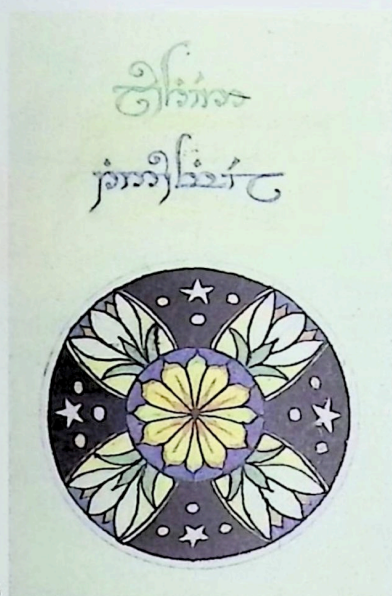
224 C.S. Lewis, photographed in 1947. Tolkien met Clive Staples Lewis in 1926, shortly after the twenty-seven year old Lewis had been appointed tutor in English Language and Literature at Magdalen College. They quickly became friends and allies in the politics of the English Department which then, as now, was sharply divided between the supporters of 'Literature' and those of 'Language'. Tolkien found in Lewis and the circle of like-minded friends that they soon attracted, the companionship and intellectual stimulation that he had lost when the TCBS ended and that he had enjoyed, in part, with E.V. Gordon and the Viking Club at Leeds. In 1927 Lewis joined Tolkien's Icelandic reading-group, the Coalbiters, and in the 1930s both became the most prominent members of the informal society, the Inklings, which met in Lewis's rooms to talk, drink and read their work aloud. A conversation with Tolkien was instrumental in Lewis's conversion to Christianity, whilst Lewis himself provided a critically appreciative audience for Tolkien's work. In later years a rift developed between the two men: 'separated first by the sudden apparition of Charles Williams, and then by his marriage', as Tolkien wrote shortly after Lewis's death in 1963. 'But we owed each a great debt to the other, and that tie with the deep affection that it begot, remains. He was a great man of whom the cold-blooded official obituaries only scraped the surface' (*Letters*, p.341).

[Bodl.] X.11.100/Lewis 5, p.255 (photogr.)

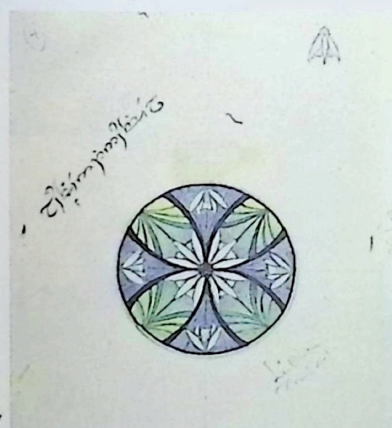
225 Chart of vowel-changes. Much of Tolkien's work as an historical philologist involved detailed analysis of the elements concerned in the evolution of words, particularly the relationship between pronunciation and spelling, as shown in a chart compiled by him in 1942 which maps the 'Normal Development of "A" in Vespasian Ps[alter] & Ancrène Wisse'.

Tolkien A14/1, fol.143

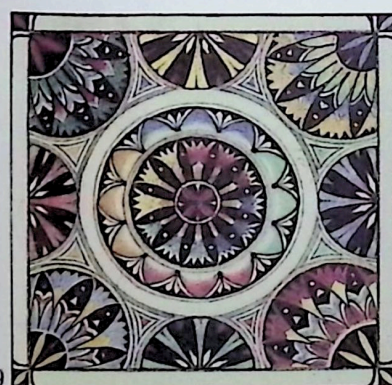




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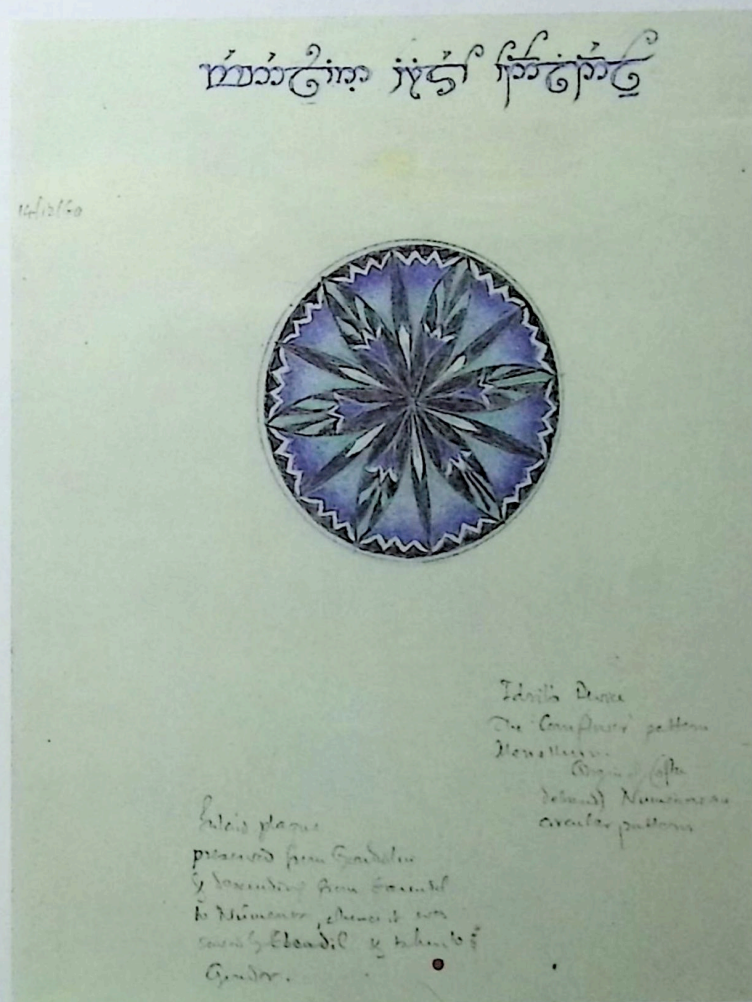
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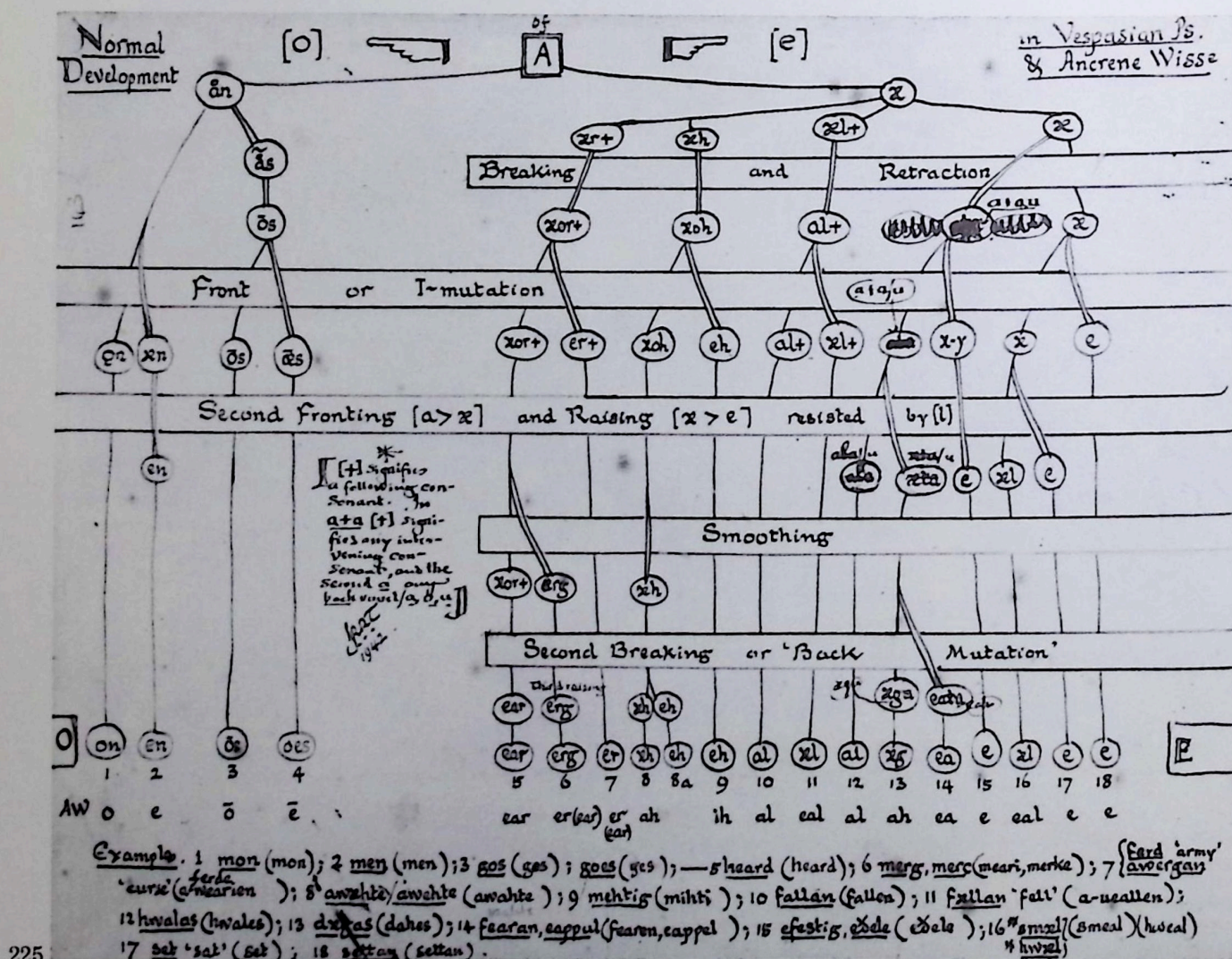


218

- 212 Flowering tree, 1928
216-17 Lúthien's device, c. 1960
218 Inlaid plaque, 1960
219 Númenorian tile, 1960

226–7 *Ancrene Wisse*. Tolkien had a lifelong interest in this medieval book of devotional instruction which was written in about 1230. In an article published in 1929 in *Essays and Studies*, he argued that the language of the ‘Ancrene Riwe’ (which seems to have originated in the West Midlands) was a significant literary language and not simply a rustic dialect. He began to prepare an edition of the Corpus Christi College Cambridge manuscript for publication by the Early English Text Society, but other commitments, notably *The Lord of the Rings*, intervened and the edition was not published until 1962. Item 226 shows a page from a series of notes that Tolkien made on the recurrence of capital letters, using coloured crayons. They are written on the *pro formas* that he sent out in response to fan letters about *The Lord of the Rings* in the mid-1950s: ‘Thank you very much for your kind letter . . . I was very pleased to have it and I hope you will forgive the long delay in acknowledging it. I have had rather a lot of letters since the book came out, and I have also been ill’. Even when Tolkien reached the proof stage of his writing he continued to write and amend copiously. Item 227 shows a typically annotated *Ancrene Wisse* page-proof of 4 February 1960. An unfortunate line-break at the end of line 7 has led to the appearance of the phrase ‘bum tuum’ rather than ‘verbum tuum’, as Tolkien has noted in red ink. The mistake was corrected before publication.

Tolkien A3/1, fol.43; A7/2b, fol.239





228 'Chaucer as a Philologist'. Tolkien originally read this paper on 'The Reeve's Tale' on 16 May 1931 to the Philological Society, although it was not published in their *Transactions* until 1934. The dilapidated state of the copy of the article exhibited here, from the Bodleian's open-shelves, is an eloquent testimony to the importance of his paper on fourteenth-century dialects. Tolkien also gave acclaimed readings of 'The Nun's Priest's Tale' and 'The Reeve's Tale' at the Oxford Summer Diversions organized by Nevill Coghill in 1938–9.

Per. 3011 d. 194, pp.10–11

229 *Beowulf: the Monsters and the Critics*. The 3000-line Anglo-Saxon epic poem *Beowulf* tells the story of the eponymous hero's youthful encounters with the monsters Grendel and his mother, and with an unnamed dragon some fifty years later, in the course of which both Beowulf and the dragon receive mortal wounds. Tolkien began reading *Beowulf* as a schoolboy and later at Oxford, where it was a compulsory element in the English syllabus. It was also the subject of one of Tolkien's own series of lectures to undergraduates, which he began with a dramatic reading of the opening lines: 'Hwaet, we Gar-Dena'. It was an unforgettable experience for his audience, as Auden testified: 'The voice was the voice of Gandalf' (*Biography*, p.133). One of Tolkien's best-known pieces of academic writing also took *Beowulf* as its theme. *Beowulf: the Monsters and the Critics* was delivered as a lecture to the British Academy on 25 November 1936 and published in 1937, the same year as *The Hobbit*. In the lecture Tolkien argued that the poem is, in its own terms, a coherent account of the superhuman opposition of Christian and heathen powers as embodied in Beowulf's fights with the monsters, and not a fragmentary jumble of traditions relating to the history of the Geatish people. He made several drafts of the lecture before arriving at the fair copy manuscript, the first page of which is exhibited here.

MS. Tolkien 1, fol.1

230 Old English 'Exodus'. Tolkien began work on the problematic English poetic version of the Old Testament book *Exodus* shortly after he returned to Oxford in 1925. He prepared an edited text, a translation and a series of notes which he used as the basis of his lectures to small, specialist classes in the 1930s and 1940s. The material remained unpublished in his lifetime but was edited by Joan Turville-Petre in 1981. The second line of the poem, as shown in Tolkien's fair copy of the opening, uses a term that he made peculiarly his own: 'middangeard', or Middle-earth (*Letters*, pp.186, 220).

Tolkien A22/1, fol.121

231 *Jonah*. On 30 January 1957 Tolkien was asked to contribute a translation of the 'Book of Jonah' to the Catholic *New Jerusalem Bible*. The story of an encounter with a monstrous creature was a congenial one and he worked on the translation for five years. However, when the *Bible* finally appeared in 1966, naming Tolkien as an editor, his translation had been extensively revised. His notes in Hebrew can be seen in the left-hand margin of the manuscript of the first eight verses of Book I, 'Jonah rebels against his mission'.

Tolkien C6/1, fol.2



232 Examination paper. For much of the duration of his Rawlinson and Bosworth Professorship (he became Merton Professor of English Language and Literature in 1945) Tolkien spent part of his vacations in the dull but financially imperative task of marking examination papers. The standard was variable, as shown in an anonymous script dating from the Second World War, in which the candidate displayed great frankness when attempting to answer question 2: 'As I do not understand the poem I am unable to make any comments upon it'. Tolkien used the blank verso of the paper to draft part of a lecture to the Oxford Dante Society.

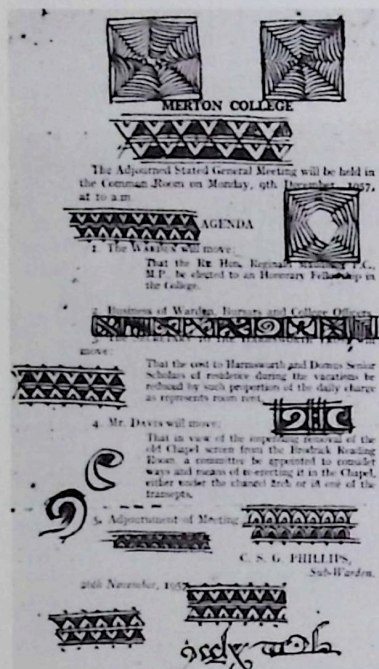
Tolkien A13/1, fol.175^v

Exodus.

HWET WE FEOR 7 NEAH gefrigen habbað
ofer middangeard Moyses domas
wretlico wordriht wera cneorissum —
in uprodor eadigra gehwam
æfter bealuside bote lifes,
lifigendra gehwam langsumne xed —
hæledum secgan : gehyre & ðe wille!
None on westenne Weroda Drihten,
soðfæst Cuning, mid his sylfes niht
gewyrðode, and him wundra fela
eæc Alwalda in ðæt forgeaf.
He wæs leof Gode leoda aldor,
horsc and hreðerglæaw herges wisa,
freom foletoga. Faraones cyn
Godes andsacan, gyrdwite band,
þær him gescalde sigora Waldend
modgum magorxswan his maga feorh,
onwist eðles Abrahames sunum.

Poem begins on p.143 of MS. First line has the 'cant-number' xlii, above neah. 23 and a half lines follow, vv. 1-29 (wiston). Then a line and a half are blank. 1. Hwæt - neah in capitals, with large ornamental initial H. habbað : habbað. 3. wretlico : wretlico 7 hæledum. 6. ~~and~~ werode. 15 andsaca. 17 magorxswan. 18 onwist.

9 LAST YEARS



MS. Tolkien drawings 91, fol. 22v

In 1965, when he was seventy-three, Tolkien wrote: 'I find it difficult to work – beginning to feel old and the fire dying down' (*Biography*, p. 236). He had retired from the Merton Professorship in 1959 with the intention of completing the 'Silmarillion', but although he continued to revise it until his death it remained unfinished, as did several academic projects which he had hoped to publish during his retirement. Although an Honorary Fellow of Exeter and an Emeritus Fellow at Merton, Tolkien missed the society of his colleagues. The cooling of his friendship with C.S. Lewis, who died in 1963, also deprived him of an important source of intellectual and emotional companionship at this time. 'He was a man of "cronies"', Lewis once wrote of Tolkien, 'and was always best in some small circle of intimates where the tone was at once both Bohemian, literary, and Christian' (*Biography*, p. 236). Yet, as Tolkien became accustomed to retirement, his last years proved to be not as unrewarding or unproductive as he had anticipated.



233 Valedictory address. Four years after the publication of *The Return of the King*, on 5 June 1959, Tolkien delivered his 'Valedictory Lecture' to a capacity audience in Merton College Hall. In it he lamented the passing of 'the golden days . . . when English studies were unorganised, a hobby and not a trade', and the advent in their place of 'the B.Litt. sausage-machine'. He concluded by quoting his own Elvish poem, 'Namárië [Farewell]' (item 244), and by paying tribute to 'my pupils . . . who have taught me much . . . who have gone on to a learning to which I have not attained'. Tolkien made several drafts of this lecture, a version of which was edited by Mary Salu and Robert T. Farrell in 1979. Exhibited here is the first, typescript page of another version edited by Christopher Tolkien in *The Monsters and the Critics and Other Essays* (1983), with its disarming beginning: 'It might be held characteristic that, though I have occupied two chairs (or sat uneasily on the edge of two chairs) in this university, I have not yet delivered an inaugural lecture: I am now about 34 years behind'. Tolkien misdated the manuscript 5 June 1958.

MS. Tolkien 23, fol. 78

234 Tolkien in old age. This photograph was one of a series taken in retirement, showing Tolkien in a characteristic pose, smoking his pipe. 'Every morning', he wrote, 'I wake up and think, good, another 24 hours' pipe-smoking' (*Guardian*, 28–9 Dec. 1991).

Given by HarperCollins Publishers



235–8 *The Adventures of Tom Bombadil* (1962). Tolkien's redoubtable aunt Jane Neave wrote to him in 1961, when she was 90, to ask him if he had ever thought of publishing a book 'with Tom Bombadil at the heart of it' (*Letters*, p. 308). The poem 'The Adventures of Tom Bombadil' had been published in the *Oxford Magazine* in 1934, long before Bombadil's appearance in *The Lord of the Rings*. After he received Aunt Jane's letter, Tolkien began collecting and rewriting a group of sixteen poems that he had composed for the most part in the 1920s and 1930s. *The Adventures of Tom Bombadil and other verses from the Red Book* was published with illustrations by Pauline Baynes on 22 November 1962. The poem 'Bombadil goes Boating' was written in 1961–2 especially for the book. An early draft (item 235) was titled 'The Merry Flitting' and is substantially different from the published version, of which three printed editions are

exhibited: the first British edition, 1962 (236), together with editions in French, 1975 (237) and German, 1984 (238). Jane Neave died a few months after the book's publication, in 1963.

MS. Tolkien 19, fol.19; 25210 d. 1045; HarperCollins donation, covers

239–43 *Smith of Wootton Major* (1967). 'An old man's book, already weighted with the presage of "bereavement"', was how Tolkien described his last published work (*Letters*, p.389). In fact, he was about to enjoy the period of his greatest fame with the appearance of the Ace Books and Ballantine editions of *The Lord of the Rings* (items 180–1), and just as 'Leaf by Niggle' both expressed and ameliorated his anxiety about *The Lord of the Rings* in 1942–3, so in *Smith of Wootton Major* he was able to give form to his fear of old age. The story of Smith's dealings with Faery and its emissary, Alf (Elf) Prentice, developed from a preface to George Macdonald's *The Golden Key* that Tolkien began to write in January 1965. The preface remained unfinished but a description of 'Faery' that Tolkien intended to occupy two or three paragraphs evolved into a complete and independent story which was published in 1967, with illustrations by Pauline Baynes. The first page of an amended typescript draft of the opening is exhibited as item 239, together with (240) Tolkien's own proof copy of the book and three foreign editions: the first American edition, 1967 (241), and translations into Afrikaans, 1968 (242) and Finnish, 1983 (243).

MS. Tolkien 9, fol.83; MS. Tolkien 13; HarperCollins donation, covers



244–6 Donald Swann, *The Road Goes Ever On*. In 1965 Donald Swann, who was a great admirer of Tolkien's work, began setting six poems from *The Lord of the Rings* to music. Tolkien was enthusiastic and helped Swann with the setting of 'Namárië', the revised manuscript of which, including notes on chanting, is exhibited as item 244. In the foreword to *The Road Goes Ever On*, Swann described how he toured the song-cycle with 'a gifted singer with the unbelievably suitable name of William Elvin' and gave a performance in Merton College for the Tolkiens' Golden Wedding anniversary in 1966. A seventh song, 'Errantry' from *The Adventures of Tom Bombadil*, was added before the songs were published in 1967 in America (item 246) and in 1968 in Great Britain.

Flanders and Swann also toured America with their popular review, *At the Drop of Another Hat*, which included a performance of 'I Sit beside the Fire'. In a letter to Tolkien written from Boston on 13 November 1966 (item 245) Swann related how he had been deluged by 'a regular stream of your fans' after a 'tricky' opening night: 'a noted strangler was roving the streets (9 victims to-date) and inhibiting the window trade, as we say'.

MSS. Tolkien 20, fol.68; 21, fol.1; HarperCollins donation, cover

247 'For W.H.A.' Auden's admiration for Tolkien had begun as an undergraduate when he heard him lecture on *Beowulf* (item 229). Although Tolkien was one of the examiners who awarded Auden a Third Class degree in 1928 and was temperamentally opposed to the poet in matters of politics and sexuality, nevertheless the two men enjoyed an unlikely, mainly epistolary friendship which survived Auden's sometimes over-enthusiastic championing of *The Lord of the Rings* and his ill-advised remarks to the New York Tolkien Society in December 1965 about Tolkien's supposedly 'hideous' taste in interior design (*Letters*, p.367). Tolkien's poem 'For W.H.A.' was written in Anglo-Saxon for the journal *Shenandoah*, whose winter 1967 issue was a *Festschrift* for Auden's

Namárië. Aldaniello nainië Lóriendesse
Galadriel's lament in Lórien.

Revised text:

Aa-i-i] Ai! laurië lantar lassi súrinëu, I
yéni | únótimë | ve rámpar áldaron! III
Yéni | ve lintë yúldar avántier
mí oromárdi lisse-mírwóreva II
Andúne pélla Várda tellumär
nu lúni, lyássen tintilär | éleni
ómáryö áretári-líninën. III

(ques) =
united
chess' and

Inters me chant
Not should place
as in the I - III
in ending - as in
last of the first

Sí mán | yúlma nín | enquántuva? III

An sí | tintálla Várda Óplossëd I
ve fanyar máryat Élentári ótponë, II
ar ílye tíer úndulávë lúmbulë; III
aþ sindanóriello caita mómie
i faluvalinnar ímbe méti, ar hísië
untúpa Calaciryó mívá ótalë. II
Sí vánwa ná | Rómello vánwa, Valimär! III

Namárië! III Nai híruválye Valimär. II
Nai élye híruvã | Namárië! III

(Accented not quantitative)
This is metrically written in iambic lines of 5 or 6 iambic
feet (various, on -), but that need not be considered
in arranging a chant. Long vowels are marked /, but ^{they} do
not necessarily bear the stress accent. The stress-accent is
(as e.g. in Latin) on the initial syllable, except that in words of
3 or more syllables it falls on the penult if that is long: thus
télumär, súrinën, éleni, but Andúne, úndulávë, óromárdi.
Long syllables are those containing a long vowel (yéni), or
diphthong (ai, au, oi, ui etc) laurië, caita; or a short vowel
followed by some kind of 2 or more consonants: lantar, lassi.
MS. Tolkien 2

sixtieth birthday. Tolkien also provided a translation to accompany the poem, for 'Wystan my friend'. Auden died in the same month as Tolkien, on 28 September 1973.

Per. 2714 d. 186, pp.96-7

248 A.D. Godley's 'Motor Bus'. Tolkien frequently expressed his dislike of the mechanics of industrialization and the machinery of the modern world. Although he briefly owned a car in the 1930s, as he grew older the motor car came to symbolize for him the destructive forces of twentieth-century life. In the early 1960s he wrote an unpublished satire, 'The Bovadium Fragments', in which Oxford is destroyed by the *motores* from Cowley, which block the streets and suffocate the population (*Biography*, p.163). He evidently approved of A.D. Godley's prescient poem deploring, in Latin and English, the juggernaut-like progress of an omnibus through Cornmarket and the High in 1914:

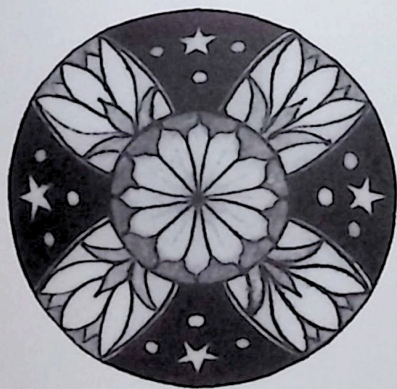
How shall wretches live like us
Cincti Bis Motoribus?
Domine, defende nos
Contra hos Motores Bos!

Tolkien's copy of 'Motor Bus' is a hand-printed single sheet, reprinted from Godley's *Fifty Poems* (1927) by the Samson Press, Woodstock, and illustrated by Iain Macnab.

Tolkien A62, fol.40

249 Honorary Doctorate. Tolkien received several academic and public honours in the last twenty years of his life, including the award of a CBE in March 1972. On 4 June of the same year, Oxford University conferred on him an Honorary Doctorate of Letters, at which the photograph exhibited here was taken. The degree was awarded for Tolkien's contribution to philology and not for his imaginative writing, although the Public Orator concluded his speech with the hope that: 'as the Road goes ever on, he will produce from his store Silmarillion and scholarship' (*Biography*, p.255).

2569 d. 785, p.275 (photogr.)



250 Last diary. In June 1968 Tolkien and Edith had gone to live in Bournemouth, where Tolkien resumed work on the 'Silmarillion' and Edith enjoyed a more relaxed and friendlier social life than at Oxford. On 29 November 1971, after a short illness, Edith died, aged eighty-two. 'I am utterly bereaved', Tolkien wrote (*Letters*, p.415). 'She was... my Lúthien... her hair was raven, her skin clear, her eyes brighter than you have seen them... [We rescued one another] from the dreadful sufferings of our childhoods... the lapses and darknesses which at times marred our lives... never touched our depths nor dimmed our memories of our youthful love' (*Letters*, p.420-1). Tolkien came back to Oxford to live in a college house in Merton Street. His last two years were spent visiting family and friends, including Christopher Wiseman. On 28 August 1973 he went to Bournemouth to stay with Denis and Jocelyn Tolhurst, the doctor who had attended Edith and himself during their time there. He was taken ill during the night of Thursday 30 August, and died in hospital of a chest infection following a perforated gastric ulcer early on Sunday 2 September, aged eighty-one. In his desk diary for the week 27 August - 2 September Tolkien made a note of his visit to the Tolhursts and of Jocelyn Tolhurst's birthday on 30 August, the night he was taken ill. In the space for the entry for 4 September he wrote: 'return from Tolhursts'.

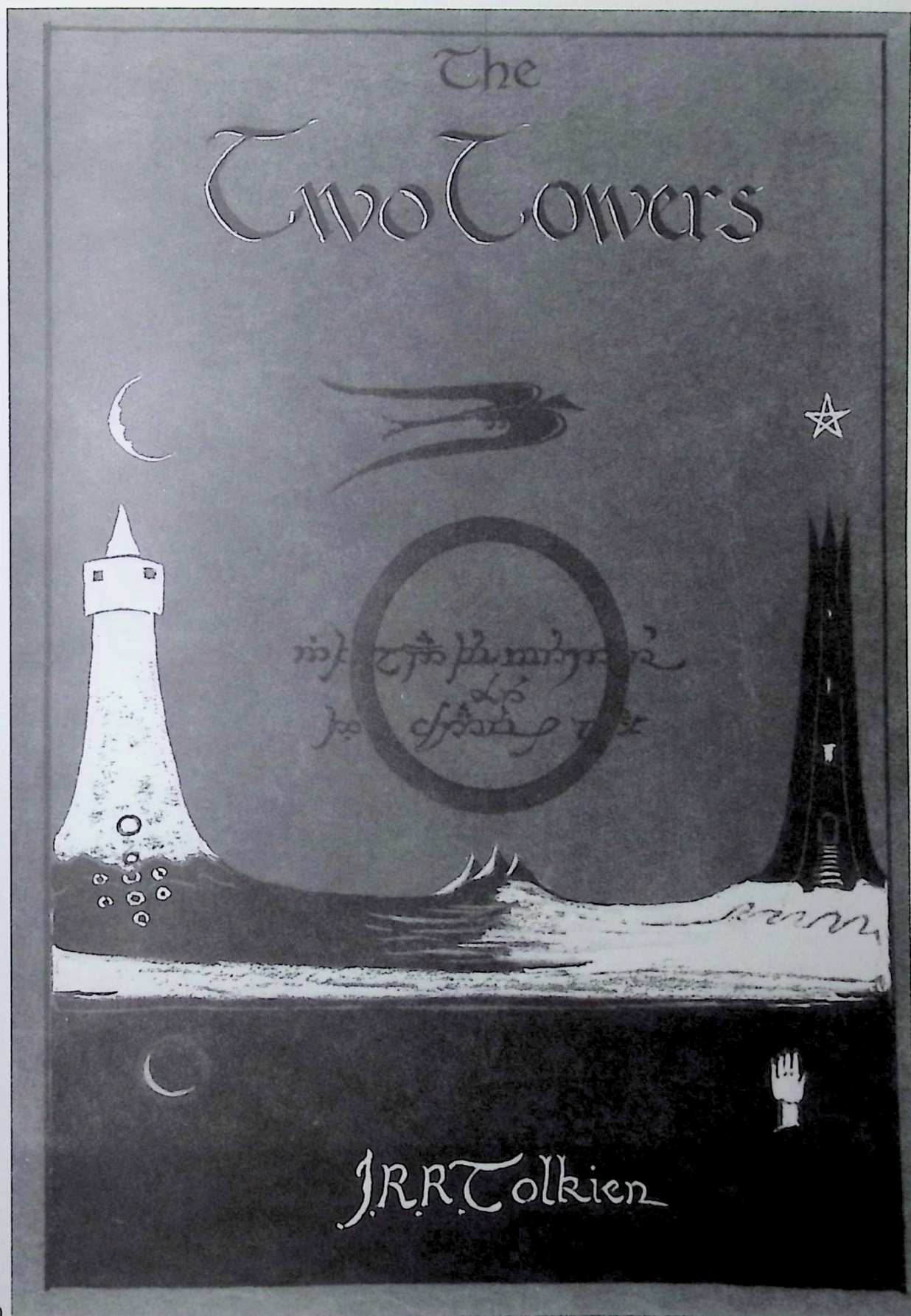
Family papers 1/27



MOTOR BUS

WHAT is this that roareth thus ?
 Can it be a Motor Bus ?
 Yes, the smell and hideous hum
 Indicat Motorem Bum !
 Implet in the Corn and High
 Terror me Motoris Bi :
 Bo Motori clamitabo
 Ne Motore caeder a Bo —
 Dative be or Ablative
 So thou only let us live :
 Whither shall thy victims flee ?
 Spare us, spare us, Motor Be !
 Thus I sang ; and still anigh
 Came in hordes Motores Bi,
 Et complebat omne forum
 Copia Motorum Borum.
 How shall wretches live like us
 Cincti Bis Motoribus ?
 Domine, defende, nos
 Contra hos Motores Bos !

A. D. Godley. January 1914



AFTERWORD



Tolkien's popularity remains undiminished in the twenty years that have elapsed since his death. As well as current annual sales of 3.8 million copies of his books world-wide, a 1986 bibliography (Judith A. Johnson, *J.R.R. Tolkien. Six Decades of Criticism*) lists 1,649 reviews, articles and books written about Tolkien between 1922–1984, of which nearly seven hundred were published after 1973. Although some contemporary manifestations of his popularity would not have pleased Tolkien himself, all are a tribute to the extraordinarily powerful and diverse legacy bequeathed by the man who once wrote (*Letters*, p.211): 'I do not really think that I am frightfully important'.

RNXY

QXJYQ

QARNFNANFXBQ

•RNXYKYLAQXJYKATFABATIN•



First 'Silmarillion' map

GENERAL INDEX



Numbers prefixed by p. refer to pages, otherwise to items. The exhibits are in bold type. Tolkien's writings and art-work are listed under his name in the following order: principal works (that is, *The Hobbit*, *The Lord of the Rings* and *The Silmarillion*); other writings; paintings and drawings, excluding illustrations for the principal works which are listed under that heading.

- A** Abyssinia 87
 academic papers, *see* Tolkien, JRRT
 other writings, academic
 Ace Books 179, **180**, 239–43
 Afrikaans language **242**
 Allen & Unwin *publishers* p.45, 88–104, 111,
 113, **115**, **117**, **120–1**, **141**, p.57, 147,
 150–71, 179, p.66, **236**, **240**, 244–6
Ancrene Riwe, *see* *Ancrene Wisse*
Ancrene Wisse 72, 149, **225–7**
 Andrew Lang Memorial Lecture **139**
 Anglicanism 11–12, 26–7
 Anglo-Saxon language 18, 65, p.45, **87**, **247**.
 See also Rawlinson and Bosworth
 Professorship
 'Animalic' 20
 Antwerp 35
 Apolausticks, The **38**
 Ardenne, Simonne Thérèse R.O. d' **146**
 Ariosto, Ludovico 175
 Aristophanes 31
 Arthurian legend **136**
At the Drop of Another Hat 244–6
 Atlantis 202
 Auden, Wystan Hugh 20, 34, p.45, 180–2,
 229, **247**
- B** Ballantine Books **122**, 179, **181**, 239–43
 Bank of Africa 4
 Barclay's Bank, Oxford 33
 Barry, Sir Charles 16
 Battle of the Somme, *see* Somme
 Baynes, Pauline Diana **129**, **141**, **179**, **236**,
 240
 Bedford 46–7
Beowulf 18, 31, p.45, **132**, p.75, 229, **247**
 Berlin p.8
Bible, Old Testament **225**, **230–1**. *See also*
 New Jerusalem Bible
 Birmingham 1–2, 4, 9–10, 13, p.15. *See also*
 King Edward's School
 Birmingham Oratory 13, 17, 24, **137**
 Blackwell's Art Shop, Oxford 33
 Bloemfontein 4, 6–9
 Bodleian Library, *see* Oxford *univ.*, Bodleian
 Library
 Book Club Associates **205**
Bored of the Rings **182**
 Boston strangler 245
 Bournemouth 250
 Bradley, Henry 65
 Bratt, Edith, *see* Tolkien
 Bratt, Frances 24
 Brewerton, George 18
 British Academy 229
 Bulgarian language p.45, **124**
- C** calligraphy **42**, **87**
 Cambridge *univ.*, Corpus Christi College
 226–7
Cape Argus Weekly Edition 4
 Capes, William Wolfe **18**
 Capetown 4

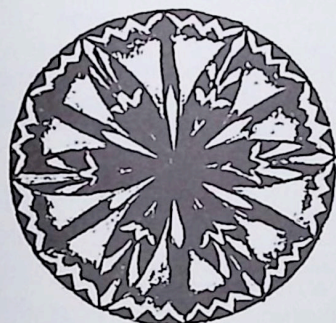


- Catholicism, *see* Roman Catholicism
 Chambers's *Etymological Dictionary* **19**
 Chapman, George 20
 Chaucer, Geoffrey 22, **228**
 Cheltenham 26–7, 46–7
 Chequers Club, *see* Oxford *univ.*, Chequers
 Club
 Children's Book Club **116**
 Christianity 224, 229, p.82. *See also*
 Anglicanism; Roman Catholicism
 Clark Hall, *see* Hall
 Classics 28, 29, 34–5, 43–4
 Coalbiters, The 224
 codes **14**, **20**, 49–50
 Coghill, Nevill Henry Kendal Aylmer 193, 228
 Cole, George Douglas Howard **45**
 Collins, Annie 24
 Corpus Christi College, *see* Cambridge *univ.*,
 Corpus Christi College
 Cosman, Milein 141–6
 Cotgrave, Randle 65
 'Council of London, The' 45
 Cowley 248
 Craigie, Sir William Alexander p.36, p.45
- D** Dagnall, Susan p.45
 Danish language **190**
 Dante Society, *see* Oxford *univ.*, Dante
 Society
 d'Ardenne, *see* Ardenne
 de la Motte Fouqué, *see* La Motte-Fouqué
 doodles **48**, **87**, **136**, **222–3**
 drama, *see* *Rivals*; verse-speaking
Dublin Review 140
 Dutch language 75–86, 183–90
 Dyson, Hugo 193
- E** Early English Text Society **227**
 Earp, Thomas Wade **45**
 Eastbury 41
 Edgbaston 17, 24
 Edinburgh, St. Andrew's University **139**
 Edward VI, King of England 16
 Eliot, Sir Charles Norton **34**
 Elvin, William 244–6
 English Faculty, *see* Oxford *univ.*, English
 Faculty
 Esperanto 20
 Essay Club, *see* Oxford *univ.*, Exeter College
Essays and Studies 226–7
Essays Presented to Charles Williams 139
 Estonian language p.45, **127**
 Evesham 2
 examination papers **44**, **67**, p.45, **87**, **232**
 Exeter College, *see* Oxford *univ.*, Exeter
 College
Exodus **230**
- F** Fafnir 132
 Farrell, Robert Thomas 233
 Farrer, Austin Marsden 114
 Farrer, Katharine Dorothy **114**
 Father Francis, *see* Morgan



Faulkener, Mrs. 24, 26–7
Finnish Grammar, A 34
 Finnish language 34, 143, 243
 First World War, *see* War 1914–18
 Flanders, Michael 244–6
 football, *see* rugby
Fourteenth Century Verse & Prose 68
 France 14, 44, p.30, 46–7, 51, 54, 57–8
 French language p.15, 18, 75–86, p.45, 126, 186, 237
 Furth, Charles 100–4, 147

G Geats 229
 German language p.8, p.15, 18, 75–86, 185, 238
 Germanic languages p.15, 20, 34–5, 65, 110
 Gilson, Robert Cary 22, 56
 Gilson, Robert Quilter 22, 51, 53, 54, 55, 56
Glasgow Chronicle p.8
 Godley, Alfred Denis 248
Golden Key, The 239–43
 Gordon, Eric Valentine 69–71, 224
 Gordon, George Stuart 66, 67, 69
 Gothic language 20, 35
 Graves, Robert Ranke p.30
 Great Haywood 46–7
 Great War, *see* War 1914–18
 Greek language 18. *See also* Classics
 Griffiths, Elaine p.45
 Grove, Sir George 24
 Grove, Jennie 24, 46–7
Guardian 234
Guelph, S.S. 8



H Haldane, Naomi, *see* Mitchison
 Hall, John Richard Clark p.45
 Halliwell-Phillipps, *see* Phillipps
 handwriting, *see* calligraphy
 HarperCollins publishers 191
Harvard Lampoon, *see* Bored of the Rings
 Hebrew language p.45, 125, 188, 231
 Heidelberg 35
 Houghton Mifflin publishers p.8, p.45, 100–4, 122, 206, 241, 246. *See also* Ballantine Books
 Hove 15
 Hungarian language 189
 Huxley, Aldous Leonard 45

I Icelandic language 49–50, p.36, 144, 224. *See also* Norse
 imaginary languages, *see* languages, invented
 Incledon, Edith Mary ('May') 12, 62
 Incledon, Marjorie 20, 31
 Incledon, Mary 20, 31
 Incledon, May, *see* Incledon, Edith Mary
 Incledon, Walter 11–12, 62
 Inklings, The 22, 147, 224
 inscriptions 42
 International Club for Psychical Research 62
 invented languages, *see* languages, invented

J Japanese language 75–86, p.45, 128, 187
Jerusalem Bible, *see* New Jerusalem Bible
 Jessop family 26–7, 46–7
 Johnson, Judith Anne p.88
Jonah 231

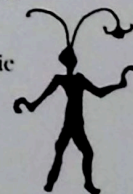
K *Kalevala* 34
 'Katherine Group' 72

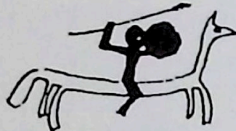
Keats, John 20
 King Edward's School, Birmingham 16–31, 34, 36–40. Debating and Literary Societies 22. King Edward's Horse 41
 Kullervo 45, p.66

L Lady Margaret Hall, *see* Oxford univ., Lady Margaret Hall
 La Motte-Fouqué, Friedrich Heinrich, freiherr de 193
 Lancashire Fusiliers 46, 51, 55
 'Land of Heroes', *see* *Kalevala*
 Lang, Andrew 132, 139
 language 10, 13–14, p.15, 18, 19–20, 22, 35, 42, 49–50, 63, 65, 66, 67, 71, p.75, 224, 225–8, 249
 languages, invented 20, 34–5, p.45, p.66, 215–23, p.75, 233, 244
 Larkin, Philip Arthur 59
 Latin language p.15, 18, 146, 248. *See also* Classics
 Lawrence, Thomas Edward 29
 Lee, Alan 191
 Leeds university p.36, 66–86, p.45, 198, 224
 Leverhulme Research Fellowship 114
 Lewis, Clive Staples p.30, 68, 70, p.45, 147, 175, 194, 202, p.75, 224, p.82
 lexicography p.36, 65, 72
 Lisieux 56
 Lloyds Bank, Birmingham 4
 London 22, 45, 51
 London, University College 71
 Longmans publishers 119
 'Lord's Prayer' 2
 Lovelace Society, *see* Oxford univ., Worcester College

M Macdonald, George 193, 239–43
 Macnab, Iain 248
 Magdalen College, *see* Oxford univ., Magdalen College
 Malay language 145
 Manchester 60
 Margrethe II, Queen of Denmark 190
 Marquette University 87, 148
 Merton College, *see* Oxford univ., Merton College
 Merton Professorship 232, p.82, 233
 Middle English language 18, 68, 70, 72, p.75
Middle English Vocabulary, A 68
 Mitchison, Naomi Margaret 45
 monograms 21, 39–41
 Moorman, Frederic William 66
 Morgan, Father Francis Xavier 13–14, 15, 17, 20, 24, 26–7, 30, 33, 43, 48, 62, 137–8
 Morris, William 45, 193
 'Motor Bus' 248
 Muir, Edwin 180–2

N Neave, 'Aunt Jane', *see* Neave, Emily Jane
 Neave, Edwin 15
 Neave, Emily Jane 15, 32, 112, 139, 235–8
New English Dictionary p.36, 65, 68, 192
New Jerusalem Bible 231
 New York Tolkien Society 247
 Norse language 22, 35. *See also* Icelandic
Northern Venture, A 73
 'Nun's Priest's Tale, The' 31, 228





- O *Observer* 180–2
 Old English language 35, 230
 Orange Free State 4, 7
 'Origin of Gandalf' 32
 Osgood, Charles Grosvenor 42
Out of the Silent Planet 202
Owl and the Nightingale, The 148
Oxford English Dictionary, see *New English Dictionary*
Oxford Magazine 235–8
Oxford Poetry, 1915 45
Oxford Summer Diversions, see *Oxford univ.*, *Summer Diversions*
Oxford university 22, 24, 28, 29, 32–5, 42, 44, 45, 58, 61, p.36, 66, 69–70, p.45, 114, p.52, p.75, 229–30, 247, 249, 250
Oxford univ., Bodleian Library 109, 115, 228
 —, Chequers Club 40
 —, Dante Society 232
 —, English Faculty 87, 224
 —, Exeter College 23, 28, 29, 31, 32–45, p.30, 193, p.82. *Essay Club* 37, 193.
Stapledon Society 36–40
 —, Lady Margaret Hall p.36
 —, Magdalen College 66, 224
 —, Merton College 29, p.82, 233, 244–6. *See also* *Merton Professorship*
 —, St. Hugh's College p.36
 —, Summer Diversions 228
 —, University Museum 132
 —, Worcester College 141–6

- P *Pearl* 18, 42
 Penguin Books, see *Puffin*
 Petre, Joan Turville– 230
 Philipps, James Orchard Halliwell– 65
Philological Society 228
 philology, see *language*
 Polish language 142, 183
Primer of the Gothic Language, A 20, 35
Psalms, see *Vespasian Psalter*
Psychical Research, see *International Club for Psychical Research*
Puffin Books 118



- Q 'Quenya' 34, p.66, p.75, 233, 244

- R Ransome, Arthur Michell 113
 Rawlinson and Bosworth Professorship p.45, p.75, 232–3
Realities 135
Red Fairy Book, The 132
 Rednal 15
 'Reeve's Tale, The' 31, 228
Review of English Studies 72
 Reynolds, R.W. ('Dickie') 22, 32, 59, 197
 Riddett, H.E. 108
Rivals, The 31
Road Goes Ever On, The 244–6
 Roman Catholicism 11–12, 15, 26–7, 33, 43, 48, 62, 87, 138, 231
Roman History 18
 Royal Air Force 147
 rugby football 23, 36
 Rugeley, see *Great Haywood*

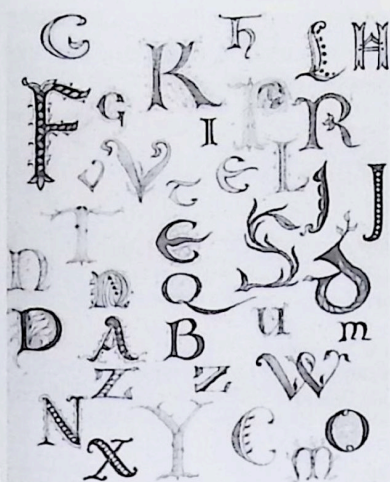
- S St. Hugh's College, see *Oxford univ.*, *St. Hugh's College*
 Salu, Mary Bertha 233
Samson Press 248



- Sanskrit language 35
 Sarehole 10, p.15
 Sassoon, Siegfried Loraine p.30
 Saxony p.8
 Sayers, Dorothy Leigh 45
 School Certificate, see *examination papers*
 Second World War, see *War 1939–45*
 'Seven Words on the Cross, The' 27
Shenandoah 247
 Sheridan, Richard Brinsley 31
 Sidgwick & Jackson *publishers* 49–50
Signalling 49
 signatures 38, 42, 48, 87
 Sigurd 132
 'Sindarin' 35
Sir Gawain and the Green Knight 18, 70
 Sisam, Kenneth 66, 68, p.45
 Smith, Geoffrey Bache 22, 45, 51, 53, 55, 57–8, 59
 Smith, Roger 58
 Smith, Ruth 58
 Somme, Battle of the p.30, 51, 52, 54–5, 57
Songs for the Philologists 71, 73
 South Africa 4–9, 147
 Southampton 8
 Spanish language 13, 20
 Sparrow, Emily, see *Suffield*
Spring Harvest, A 59
Stapledon Society, see *Oxford univ.*, *Exeter College*
 'Stations of the Cross, The' 26
 Stowe, Mary Jane, see *Tolkien*
 Suffield, Beatrice ('Auntie Bea') 17, 24
 Suffield, Edith Mary ('May'), see *Inclendon*
 Suffield, Emily (grandmother of JRRT) 15
 Suffield, Emily Jane ('Aunt Jane'), see *Neave*
 Suffield, John (grandfather of JRRT) 2, 3, 9, 15, 62
 Suffield, Mabel, see *Tolkien*
 Suffolk Regiment 54
 Swann, Donald 244–6
 Swedish language 75–86, p.45, 123, 184
 Switzerland 32, 112



- T Tancred, Gwendoline S. 135
 TCBS, *The* 22, 45, 53–5, 57, 224
 Tea Club and Barrovian Society, see *TCBS*
 Thorburn, Archibald 100–4
Time & Tide 175
Times, The 29
 Tolhurst, Denis and Jocelyn 250
 Tolkien, Arthur Reuel (father of JRRT) 1, 3–4, 5, 7, 8, 9, 11–12, 31, 62
 Tolkien, Baillie (daughter-in-law of JRRT) 75–86
 Tolkien, Christopher Reuel (son of JRRT) 7, p.36, 74–86, p.45, 113, 147, 176–8, 197–8, 205–6, 233
 Tolkien, Edith Mary (wife of JRRT) 24, 25–7, 28, 30, 33, 43, 47–8, 62, 64, 137–8, 192, 194–6, 244–6, 250
 Tolkien, G. (ancestor of JRRT) p.8, 2
 Tolkien, Grace (aunt of JRRT) p.8, 1
 Tolkien, Henry (great-uncle of JRRT) p.8
 Tolkien, Hilary Arthur Reuel (brother of JRRT) 8–10, 13, 15, 17, 24–5
 Tolkien, J.B. (ancestor of JRRT) p.8, 2
 Tolkien, John Benjamin (grandfather of JRRT) p.8, 1, 2, 5, 6, 62
 Tolkien, John Francis Reuel (son of JRRT) 7, 61, p.36, 62–4, 74–86, p.45, 113, 130–1, 194–6



221

Floral alphabet, 1960

**Tolkien, John Ronald Reuel (1892–1973)**PRINCIPAL WORKS: *The Hobbit*.

General references 6, 19, p.45, 87–129, p.52, 132, p.57, 147, 150–65, 179, 181, 191, p.66, 203–14, p.75, 229. Paintings and drawings 88–98, 100–11, p.57; dust-jacket 99. British editions 100–4, 111, 115–21, p.57, 191. Foreign editions 100–4, 122–8. Calendars 108, 110, 207–14.

The Lord of the Rings. General references 6, 19, 32, p.30, 87, 109, 113, 116–17, 122, 129, p.52, 139–40, 147–91, p.66, 194–6, 203–23, p.75, 226–7, 233, 235–47. Paintings and drawings 150–65, 172–4; dust-jackets 166–71; map 147, 176–7. British editions 179, 191. Foreign editions 179, 180–1, 183–90. Calendars 109, 150–65, 207–14.

The Silmarillion. General references 19, 22, 34, 36–40, 57, 61, p.36, 73, p.45, 88–98, 191, 192–223, p.75, p.82, 249–50. Individual stories 'Ambarkanta' 199; 'Book of Lost Tales, The' 192, 194–8, 201; 'Fall of Gondolin, The' 36–40, 192; 'Lay of Leithian, The' 195–6, 197–8; 'Lay of the Children of Húrin, The' 197–8; 'Quenta, The' 203–4; 'Quenta Silmarillion' 203–4, 215–23; 'Shape of the World', see 'Ambarkanta'; 'Sketch of the mythology' 197, 203–4; 'Tuor B', see 'Fall of Gondolin'. Paintings and drawings 207–23; heraldic devices 216–18; map 198. British editions 191, 205. Foreign edition 206. Calendar 207–14.

OTHER WRITINGS: academic working papers 67, 87, 148, 198, 224–32. *Adventures of Tom Bombadil, The* 112, 129, 235–8, 244–6. *Ancrene Wisse* 72, 149, 225–7. *Arthur*, see 'Fall of Arthur'. Auden, see 'For W.H.A.'. *Beowulf: the Monsters and the Critics* 229; see also general index, *Beowulf*. Bliss, see *Mr. Bliss*. *Bombadil*, see *Adventures of*. 'Book of the Foxrook' 20. 'Bovadium Fragments, The' 248. 'Chaucer as a Philologist' 228. Dragons, see 'On Dragons'. 'Errantry' 244–6. 'Exodus' 230. 'Fall of Arthur, The' 136. 'Farewell', see 'Namárië'. *Farmer Giles of Ham* 87, 129, 141–6. *Father Christmas Letters, The* 7, p.36, 75–86. 'For W.H.A.' 247. 'Foxrook', see 'Book of the Foxrook'. 'Goblin Feet' 45. 'Happy Mariners', see 'Tha Eadigan Saelidan'. 'I Sit beside the Fire' 244–6. 'Jonah' 231. *Kullervo*, see 'Story of Kullervo'. 'Leaf by Niggle' 139, 140, 239–43. 'Lost Road, The' 202. 'Merry Flitting, The' 235. *Middle English Vocabulary, A* 68. *Mr. Bliss* 87. *Monsters and the Critics and Other Essays, The* 233. 'Namárië' 233, 244. 'Nameless Land, The' 135. *Niggle*, see 'Leaf by Niggle'. 'On Dragons' 132. 'On Fairy Stories' 139. *Road Goes Ever On, The* 244–6. 'Root of the Boot' 71. *Roverandom* 130–1, 133–4. *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight* 18, 70. *Smith of Wootton Major* 129, 239–43. *Some Contributions to Middle-English Lexicography* 72. *Songs for the*

Philologists 71, 73. 'Stone Troll, The' 71. 'Story of Kullervo, The' 45, p.66. 'Tha Eadigan Saelidan' 73. *Tom Bombadil*, see *Adventures of*. 'Tree', see 'Leaf by Niggle'. *Tree and Leaf* 139–40. 'Trumpets of Faerie, The' 49–50. 'Valedictory Lecture' 233. *Vespasian Psalter* 225. 'Voyage of Earendel, The' 45. 'Why the Man in the Moon Came Down too Soon' 73.

PAINTINGS AND DRAWINGS

(illustrations for principal works are listed above): early drawings (1904–12) 3, 10, 14–15, 21, 41. 'Childhood boogies' 133–4. Code-letter 14, 15. Doodles 48, 87, 136, 222–3. Dragon 132. First sketch book 10. 'Gardens of the Merking's Palace, The' 130. 'High Life at Gipsy Green' 64. 'House where "Rover" began his adventures as a "toy"' 131. 'Maddo' 133. 'Owlamoo' 134. 'Shop on the Edge of the Hills of Fairy Land, A' 74. Undergraduate sketch book 41. 'What is Home Without a Mother (or a Wife)' 15. Whitby 21.

Tolkien, Mabel (mother of JRRT) 2, 3, 4–5, 6–7, 8–10, 11, 13, 15, p.15, 17, 24, 31, 42, 112

Tolkien, Mary Jane (grandmother of JRRT) 1, 5–6

Tolkien, Michael Hilary Reuel (son of JRRT) 7, p.36, 63, 74–86, p.45, 113, 130–1, 133–4

Tolkien, Priscilla Mary Reuel (daughter of JRRT) 7, p.36, 74–86, p.45, 113
Turville-Petre, see Petre

U University College, see London, University College

University Museum, see Oxford univ.

Unwin, Rayner Stephens p.45, 111, 122, 166–71

Unwin, Sir Stanley, p.45, 114–15, 140, p.57, p.66, 203–4

v verse-speaking 31, p.75, 228–9, 247

Vespasian Psalter 225

Viking Club 71, 224

Vikings 201

w War 1914–18 33, 44, 46–61, p.36

War 1939–45 232

Warwick 46–8

Weatherhead, Mrs. 60

Welsh language 13, 35

West Midlands 2, 72, 226–7

Whitby 21

Wilkinson, Cyril Hackett 141–6

Williams, Charles Walter Stansby 139, 224

Wiseman, Christopher 22, 53, 55, 57, 74, 250

Wolvercote 194–6

Woodstock 248

Worcester College, see Oxford univ.,

Worcester College

Wright, Joseph 20, 35



INDEX OF NAMES AND PLACES

Principal references to characters, places, objects and languages in *The Hobbit*, *The Lord of the Rings*, *The Silmarillion* and other fictional works. Numbers prefixed by p. refer to pages, otherwise to items.

A Alboin 202
Alf Prentice, *see* Prentice
Alfaramdor 87

B Bag-End 97
Baggins, Bilbo 99, 102, 106–7, 116–17, 129
Baggins, Frodo 191
Balin 150–65, 174
Barad-dûr 165–71
Beleg 210
Beorn 93
Beren 194–6
Bilbo, *see* Baggins
Black Gate, *see* Morannon
Bombadil, Tom 130–1, 235–8
Bovadium 248
Brandybuck, Meriadoc 210

C Chrysophylax 132, 141–6
Cirith Ungol 166–71

D Dead Marshes p.30
Doors of Durin, *see* Durin
dragons p.45, 113, 132–4, 197–8, 229. *See also*
Chrysophylax; Glórund; Smaug
Dunharrow 162
Durin 173
dwarves p.45, 113–14, 118–21

E Earendel 45, 73, 192, 218
Elendil 148, 218
Elrond 107, 148
elves 34–5, 75–86, 94, 103, 113, 118–21, 192,
194–6, 202–4, 210, 213
Entwash 176
Eriador 129
Eriol 192
Esgaroth, *see* Lake Town

F Faerie 209. *See also* fairy
fairy 45, 50, 74, 112, 139, 239–43
Fangorn Forest 210
Farmer Giles, *see* Giles
Father Christmas 7, p.36, 75–86
Fellowship of the Ring 150–65
fire-letters 166–72
Frodo, *see* Baggins

G Gamgee, Sam 191
Gandalf 32, p.45, 87, 106–8, 116–17
Gap of Rohan, *see* Rohan
Giles, Farmer 132, 141–6
Gil-galad 148
Glórund 207
gnomes 45, 75–86
goblins 45, 83–4, p.45, 113
Gog 74
Gollum 116–17, 191
Gondobar 135
Gondolin 37, 192–3, 218
Gondor 148–9, 218
Gondothlim, *see* Gondolin
Gongothlin [*sic*], *see* Gondolin
Gwindor 210

H Helm's Deep 157
Hobbiton 89, 100
hobbits p.45, 87, 113, p.57
Hornburg 157
Húrin 197–8

I Idril 218
Ilbereth 75–86
Ilu 200
Ilurambar 199
Ilúvatar 199–201
Iron Crown 194–6
Isengard 166–71, 176

L Lake Town 95
Last Alliance 148
Leithian, *see* Lúthien
Lothlórien 156
Lúthien 194–8, 216–7, 250

M Maddo 133
Man in the Moon 73
Manwë 209
'Mazarbul' 152–4
Melko[r] 193. *See also* Morgoth
Merking 130
Merry, *see* Brandybuck
Middle-earth 176, 179, 192, 230
Minas Morgul 170
Minas Tirith 166–71
Mines of Moria, *see* Moria
Mirkwood 88–98, 210
Misty Mountains 92
Mithrim 208
Morannon p.30, 191
Mordor 163
Morgoth 194–6, 202. *See also* Melkor
Moria 150–65

N Narya 166–9
Nenya 166–9
Niggle 130
Niphredil 216–17
Noldoli 203–4
North Pole 77–8
Númen 200
Númenor 149, 171, 202, 218

O Old Man Willow 150
One Ring, *see* Ring
Orodruin 164
Orthanc 158–9, 170
Owlamoo 134

P Pippin, *see* Took
Polar Bear 75–86
Prentice, Alf 239–43

Q Quenya 34, p.66, p.75, 233, 244

R Rauros 176
Rhovanion 129
Ring, the One 116–17, 139, 166–72
Rivendell 101, 109, 163

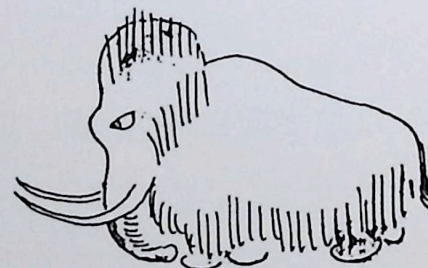
Rohan 176
Rómen 200
Roverandom 130–1, 133–4
runes 99, 107, 114

S Sam, *see* Gamgee
Saruman 140
Sauron 191, 202
Second Age 202
Shadow, The 171
Shelob 160
Silmarils 194–6, 202
Sindarin 35
Smaug p.45, 104, 110–11
Smith of Wootton Major 239–43
spiders 6. *See also* Shelob
Steinborg 161
Stickers, Bill 130–1

T Taniquetil 201, 209
Thorin 107
Thror p.45, 88, 107
Titus, Timothy 130–1
Tom Bombadil, *see* Bombadil
Took, Peregrin 210
Treebeard 210
trolls 71, 90, 108
Tuor 192
Túrin 197–8, 207

V Vaiya 199
Valinor 192, 201
Vilya 166–9

W West, The 73. *See also* Númen
Westernessee, *see* Númenor
Wilderland 98



INDEX OF SHELFMARKS

BODLEIAN MANUSCRIPTS EXHIBITED OR MENTIONED

MS. Bodley 34: 72
MS. Eng. lett. c. 220/5: **175** (illustr.)
MS. Pym 151: 59
MS. Sidgwick and Jackson 36: 49–50

MS. Tolkien 1: 31, p. , **229**, 247
– 6: 139, **140** (illustr.)
– 9: **239**
– 13: **240**
– 14: **139**
– 19: **235**
– 20: **245**
– 21: **112–13**, **114** (illustr.), 233, **244**
(illustr.)
– 23: **233**
– 25: **146**

MS. Tolkien drawings 1: **105** (illustr.)

– 2: **106**
– 7: **89**
– 9: **90**, 108
– 12: **109**
– 13: **91**
– 14: **92** (illustr.)
– 17: **93**
– 19: **94**
– 23–4: **95–6**
– 25: **97** (illustr.)
– 26: **100**
– 27: **101**, 109
– 28–9: **102–3** (illustr.)
– 30: **104**
– 31: **111** (illustr.)
– 32: **99** (illustr.)
– 33: **107** (illustr.)
– 34: **88**
– 35: **98**
– 37–8: **75–6**
– 40–1: **77–8**
– 46: **79** (illustr.)
– 49: **80** (illustr.)
– 55–8: **81–4** (illustr.)
– 61: **85**
– 69–70: **166–7**
– 71: **150**
– 72: **151** (illustr.)
– 73–4: **152–3**
– 75: **154** (illustr.)
– 76: **157**
– 78: **158**
– 79: **162**
– 80: **165** (illustr.)
– 81: **160** (illustr.)
– 82: **164**
– 83, fol. 54: **86** (illustr.)
– 84, fols. 5^v–6: **10** (illustr.)
– 85, fols. 6^v–7: **41**
– 86, fol. 1^v: **14** (illustr.), 15
– 86, fol. 5: **15** (illustr.)
– 86, fol. 8: **21** (illustr.)
– 86, fol. 25^v: **64** (illustr.)
– 86, fol. 28: **74**
– 87, fol. 33: **208** (illustr.)
– 87, fol. 34: **207** (illustr.)
– 87, fol. 37: **132** (illustr.)



Numbers prefixed by p. refer to pages, otherwise to items. The exhibits are in bold type.

– 87, fol. 52: **214**
– 87, fol. 54: **212** (illustr.)
– 88, fol. 1: **211**
– 88, fol. 27: p.5 (illustr.)
– 88, fol. 28: p.4 (illustr.)
– 88, fols. 31–2: **133–4** (illustr.)
– 89, fol. 2: **131** (illustr.)
– 89, fol. 4: **130** (illustr.)
– 89, fol. 12: **156**
– 89, fol. 13: **209** (illustr.)
– 89, fol. 14: p. , **210**
– 89, fol. 15: **155**
– 89, fol. 21: **108** (illustr.)
– 89, fol. 24: **110**
– 90, fol. 15: **163**
– 90, fol. 18: **161**
– 90, fol. 21: **169**
– 90, fol. 24: **168** (illustr.)
– 90, fol. 29: **170** (illustr.)
– 90, fol. 30: **171** (illustr.)
– 90, fol. 34: **173**
– 90, fol. 41: **172**
– 90, fol. 48: **174**
– 91, fol. 7: **217** (illustr.)
– 91, fol. 9: **216** (illustr.)
– 91, fol. 11: **218** (illustr.)
– 91, fol. 14: **219** (illustr.)
– 91, fol. 17: **220**
– 91, fol. 22^v: p.82 (illustr.)
– 91, fol. 24: **221** (illustr.)
– 91, fol. 37: **215**
– 93, fol. 47: **213**
– 94, fols. 12–13: **222–3**
– 98, fol. 1: **159**
– 100: 129, **179**
– 101: **129**, 179
– 103: 147, **176** (illustr.), **177**

Tolkien list A3/1: 72, 149, **226**
– A4/1: **67**, 149 (illustr.)
– A7/2: 72, 149, **227**
– A9/1: **148**
– A13/1: **232**
– A14/1: **87** (illustr.), p. , **225** (illustr.)
– A22/1: **230** (illustr.)
– A23: **65**
– A59/3: **136**
– A60/1: **202**
– A62: **248** (illustr.)

Tolkien list C6/1: **231**

Tolkien list E16/7–8: **18–19**
– E16/12: **68**
– E16/26: 5, **42** (illustr.)

Tolkien list S1/10: **192**
– S2/1: 22, **197** (illustr.), 203–4
– S2/3, fol. 2: **200**
– S2/3, fol. 3^v: **199**
– S2/3, fol. 9: **201** (illustr.)
– S2/10: **198** (illustr.)
– S4/1: **194**
– S4/4: **195–6**
– S5/1: **204** (illustr.)
– S5/2: **203**

Tolkien family papers 1/3: **28**, **30**
– 1/7: 5, **37–8**, **39–40** (illustr.), **44**
– 1/26: 61, **62**
– 1/27: **250**
– 1/28: **43**
– 1/29: **11**, **20** (illustr.)
– 1/30: **25** (illustr.), **26–7**, **29**
– 1/31: 5
– 1/33: p. , **1**, **2** (illustr.), **3**, **6** (illustr.),
7–8, **9** (illustr.)
– 1/34: **4** (illustr.)
– 2/1: **54**, **56** (illustr.), **58**
– 2/2: **53** (illustr.), **55**, **57**
– 2/4: **12**, **48** (illustr.), **62**
– 2/6: **50–1**, **52** (illustr.), **60** (illustr.), **61**
– 2/7: **22–3**, **31**
– 2/8: **137–8**
– 2/9: 61, **63**

BODLEIAN PRINTED BOOKS EXHIBITED OR MENTIONED

Arch. AA e.143: **115** (illustr.)
Arch. H e.55: **70** (illustr.)
G.A. Warw. 8° 296: **16** (illustr.)
24793 f.38: **49**
25210 d.1045: **112**, **236**
2527 e.4207: **119**
2527 e.4742: **120**
2527 e.4986: **116**
25397 e.301: **121**
25613 e.19652: **122**, **180–2**
25614 e.12046: **129**, **141**
25618 d.215/7: **178**
2569 d.785: **13** (illustr.), **17** (illustr.),
24 (illustr.), **32** (illustr.), **46–7** (illustr.),
66, **69** (illustr.), **249** (illustr.)
2569 d.948: **147** (illustr.)
28001 e.1875: **59**
2805 f.312: **73**
2805 f.513: **135**
30241 d.13: **72**
30321 f.1: **20**, **35**
3967 e. 145: **71**
BOD. X89. E00570: **117**
BOD. M91. D02138: **191**
Per. 2714 d.186: **247**
Per. 2805 e.639: **45**
Per. 3011 d.194: **31**, **228**
X.11.100/Lewis 5: **22**, **70**, **147**, **224** (illustr.)

HarperCollins donation: **118**, **123**, **124**
(illustr.), **125–8**, **142–5**, **180–1** (illustr.),
182–90, **205–6**, **234**, **237–8**, **241–3**, **246**

MANUSCRIPTS OR PRINTED BOOKS MENTIONED, OTHER THAN BODLEIAN

Cambridge, Corpus Christi College,
MS. 402: **226–7**

Oxford, Exeter College,
archives F. III. 4: **37**, **193**
library WSV. 30: **34**





